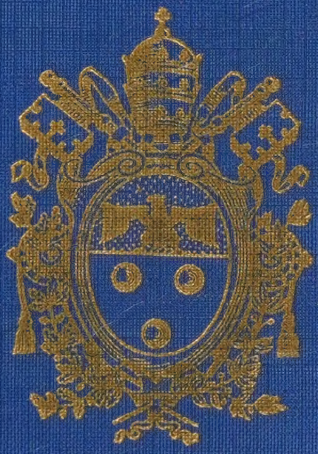

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

On the Meaning of the Term "Encyclical"

AS EXPLAINED in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, an "encyclical" (Lat. *Litterae Encyclicae*) is nothing more than a circular letter. In modern times, usage has confined the term almost exclusively to certain papal documents which differ in their technical form from the ordinary style of either Bulls or Briefs, and which in their superscription are explicitly addressed to the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, and Bishops of the Universal Church in communion with the Apostolic See. By exception, encyclicals are also sometimes addressed to the Archbishops and Bishops of a particular country.

This was done by the present Supreme Pontiff, His Holiness, Pope Pius XI, in the case of three encyclicals contained in this volume: "On the Church and Mexico," addressed particularly to the Archbishops and Bishops of Mexico; "On Motion Pictures," addressed in a special manner to the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States; and "On the Church in Germany," directed particularly to the Archbishops and Bishops of Germany.

From the nature of the case, encyclicals addressed to the Bishops of the world are generally concerned

with matters which affect the welfare of the Church at large. They condemn some prevalent form of error, point out dangers which threaten faith or morals, exhort the faithful to constancy, or prescribe remedies for evils foreseen or already existent.

During the pontificates of the three most recent Popes—Pope Pius X, Pope Benedict XV, and the gloriously reigning Supreme Pontiff, Pope Pius XI, most important utterances of the Holy See have been given to the world in the form of encyclicals or apostolic letters. Pope Pius XI has, during his pontificate which began on February 12, 1922, issued some of the most forceful and timely encyclical pronouncements ever to emanate from the Holy See.

In the past few years, the National Catholic Welfare Conference has, immediately upon issuance, printed these pronouncements in pamphlet form. Sixteen N. C. W. C. pamphlet printings of the latest encyclicals of the present Pontiff appear herein.

All the encyclical letters and pronouncements of this wise, holy, courageous and militant Pontiff have been received not only by the Faithful in every country but also in circles outside the Catholic Church with the greatest attention and respect. No one, reading the sixteen encyclicals included in this volume, can for a moment doubt the sincerity

and earnestness of Pope Pius XI when he chose for the guiding motive of his pontificate: "The Peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ." These encyclicals clearly reveal Pope Pius XI's ceaseless zeal for the advance of religion and morality throughout the world, his clear understanding of the lot of the poor, underprivileged and oppressed, and his determined and unremitting efforts for social justice, international amity and brotherly goodwill.

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3.	On the Christian Education of Youth	December 31, 1929
4.	On Saint Augustine	April 20, 1930
5.	On Christian Marriage	December 31, 1930
6.	On Reconstructing the Social Order (Forty Years After)	May 15, 1931
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16.	On the Recitation of the Rosary	September 29, 1937

ST. FRANCIS *of* ASSISI

ENCYCLICAL LETTER

—OF—

HIS HOLINESS POPE PIUS XI

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ENCYCLICAL *of* HIS HOLINESS POPE PIUS XI

—ON—

ST. FRANCIS *of* ASSISI

Issued by N. C. W. C. News Service

Translated by Rev. James H. Ryan, Ph.D.

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RITE EXPIATIS

ENCYCLICAL OF POPE PIUS XI

on the

SEVENTH CENTENARY OF THE DEATH

of

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

PIUS PP XI

Venerable Brothers,
Greetings and Apostolic Benediction:

To the great Jubilee which was celebrated in Rome and is now extended to the whole world for the period of this year, which served to purify souls and called so many to a more perfect way of life, is now to be added, as a fulfilment of the fruits received from the Holy Year, the solemn commemoration which Catholics everywhere are preparing to celebrate, the Seventh Centenary of the blessed passage of St. Francis of Assisi from his exile on earth to his heavenly home. Since Our Immediate Predecessor has assigned this Saint, who was sent by Divine Providence for the reformation not only of the turbulent age in which he lived but of Christian society of all times, to Catholic organizations engaged in social activities as their Patron, it is only right that Our children who labor in this field according to Our commands should in union with the numerous Franciscan brotherhood, call to mind and praise the works, the virtues, and the spirit of the Seraphic Patriarch. While doing this, they must reject that purely imaginary figure of the Saint conjured up by the defenders of modern error or by the followers of luxury and worldly comforts, and seek to bring Christians to the faithful imitation of the ideal

of sanctity which he exemplified in himself and which he learned from the purity and simplicity of the doctrines of the Gospels.

True Evangelical Example

It is Our desire that the religious and civic festivals to be held during this Centenary, as well as the lectures and sermons to be given, should aim at celebrating this anniversary with expressions of true devotion, without making the Seraphic Patriarch either totally different from other men or unlike the historical figure he actually was, but showing him a man gifted by nature and grace which assisted him admirably in reaching and in rendering easy for his neighbors the highest possible perfection. If others dare to compare one with another the heavenly heroes of sanctity destined by the Holy Ghost each to his own special mission amongst men—these comparisons, the fruit for the most part of party passions, are valueless and are at the same time an insult to God, the author of sanctity—it seems necessary for Us to affirm that there has never been any one in whom the image of Jesus Christ and the evangelical manner of life shone forth more life-like and strikingly than in St. Francis. He who called himself the "Herald of the Great King" was also rightly spoken of as "another Jesus Christ," appearing to his contemporaries and to future generations almost as if he were the Risen Christ. He has always lived as such in the eyes of men and so will continue to live for all future time. Nor is it marvelous that his early biographers, contemporaries of the Saint, in their accounts of his life and works, judged him to be of a nobility almost superior to human nature itself. Our Predecessors who dealt personally with Francis did not hesitate to recognize in him a providential help sent by God Himself for the welfare of Christian peoples and of the Church.

Notwithstanding the long time that has elapsed since the death of the Seraphic Father, the admiration for him, not only of Catholics but even of non-Catholics, continues to increase amazingly for the reason that his greatness appears to the minds of men with no less splendor today than it did long ago. We,

too, most ardently pray for the strength of his virtues which have been so powerful, even at the present hour, in remedying the ills of society. In fact, his work of reform has permeated so deeply Christian peoples that besides reestablishing purity of faith and of morals it has resulted in this, that even the laws of justice and of evangelical charity now inspire more profoundly and guide social life itself.

Necessity of Franciscan Spirit

The nearness of so great and happy an event as this Centenary carries with it the counsel that We avail Ourselves of your services, Venerable Brothers, as the messengers and interpreters of Our words in order to arouse in Christian peoples that Franciscan spirit which differs no wise from evangelical ideals and practices, to help in recalling to memory on such a timely occasion the teachings and example of the life of the Patriarch of Assisi. It is a pleasure for Us to compete, as it were, in devotion towards the Saint with Our Predecessors, who never permitted any centenary of the principal events of his life to pass by without exhorting the faithful to celebrate it, confirming their exhortations by the teaching authority of the Apostles which they possessed.

In this regard We recall with pleasure—and many others who are now well on in years will remember the same facts—that love for St. Francis and his work which was begotten amongst the faithful, and throughout the whole world by the Encyclical *Auspicato* written by Leo XIII forty-four years ago, on the recurrence of the Seventh Centenary of the Saint's birth; and how, at that time, the love thus born was manifested in a multitude of demonstrations of piety and in a happy renaissance of the spiritual life. We do not see why the selfsame results should not crown the coming celebrations which are equally as important as the preceding ones. The present condition of the Christian peoples should give us much more hope that such will be the case. On the one hand, no one is ignorant of the fact that today spiritual values are much better appreciated by the masses than formerly;

also that the people, taught by the experience of the past not to expect peace and security if they do not return to God, look to to the Catholic Church as the one source of salvation. On the other hand, the extension to the whole world of the Jubilee Indulgences happily coincides with this centennial commemoration which itself cannot be separated from the spirit of penance and love.

Social Conditions in Time of St. Francis

The terrible conditions existing in the times when St. Francis lived are well known to you, Venerable Brothers. It is quite true that then the faith was more deeply rooted in the people, as is proved by the holy enthusiasm with which not only professional soldiers but even citizens of every class bore arms in Palestine to free the Holy Sepulchre. However, heresies gradually arose and grew in the vineyard of the Lord, propagated either by open heretics or by sly deceivers who, because they professed a certain austerity of life and gave a false appearance of virtue and piety, easily led weak and simple souls astray. They went about, too, amongst the multitudes spreading the destructive flames of rebellion. And if some of these, in their pride, believed themselves called by God to reform the Church to which they imputed the faults of private persons, even going to the length of rebelling against the teachings and authority of the Holy See, later they openly manifested the real intentions with which they were animated. It is a notorious fact that before long the greater part of these heretics ended their careers in licentiousness and in vice, and succeeded in embroiling the state in difficulties and in undermining the foundations of religion, of property, of the family, and of society. In a word, what happened then is precisely what we see recurring so often in the course of the centuries; namely, rebellions levelled against the Church are followed or accompanied by rebellion against the state, the one receiving aid and comfort from the other.

Although the Catholic Faith still lived in the hearts of men, in some cases intact and in others a bit obscured, however lacking

they might have been in the spirit of the Gospels, the charity of Christ had become so weakened in human society as to appear to be almost extinct. To say nothing of the constant warfare carried on by the partisans of the Empire, on the one hand, and by those of the Church on the other, the cities of Italy were torn by internecine wars because one party desired to rule, refusing to recognize the rights of the Barons to govern, or because the strong wished to force the weak to submit to them, or because of the struggles for supremacy between political parties in the same city. Horrible massacres, conflagrations, devastation and pillage, exile, confiscation of property and estates were the bitter fruits of these struggles.

Sad Fate of Common People

Sad indeed was the fate of the common people, while between lords and vassals, between the greater and the lesser, as they were called, between the owners of land and the peasants existed relations in every sense of the word foreign to the spirit of humanity. Peace-loving people were harassed and oppressed with impunity by the powerful. Those who did not belong to that most unfortunate class of human beings, the proletariat, allowed themselves to be overcome by egotism and greed for possessions and were driven by an insatiable desire for riches. These men, regardless of the laws which had been promulgated in many places against vice, ostentatiously paraded their riches in a wild orgy of clothes, banquets, and feasts of every kind. They looked on poverty and the poor as something vile. They abhorred from the depths of their hearts the lepers—leprosy was then very widespread—and neglected these outcasts completely in their segregation from society. What is worse, this greed for wealth and pleasure was not even absent, though many of the clergy are to be commended for the austerity of their lives, from those who should have most scrupulously guarded themselves from such a sin. The custom, too, was prevalent of monopolizing wealth and piling up large fortunes. These fortunes were often acquired in divers and sinful

manners, sometimes by the violent extortion of money and at other times by usury. Many increased and swelled their patrimony by an illicit trade in public offices and emoluments, in the administration of justice, and even by the procuring of immunity from punishment for persons convicted of crime.

The Church was not silent under these circumstances; neither did it spare its edicts of punishment; but of what use was all this when even the Emperors drew down on themselves the anathemas of the Holy See—and to the great scandal of all—contumaciously despised these decrees? Even the monastic life, which had brought so many spiritual fruits to maturity, tarnished now by the dirt of this world, possessed no longer the strength to resist and to defend itself. If the founding of new religious orders brought some small help and strength to the maintenance of ecclesiastical discipline, certainly a much stronger flame of light and love was necessary to reform human society which had been so profoundly disturbed.

Spirit of St. Francis That of Gospels

To bring light to the people of this world which We have described, and to lead them back again to the pure ideals of the wisdom of the Gospels, there appeared, in the Providence of God, St. Francis of Assisi who, as Dante sang, "shone as the sun" (*Paradiso*, Canto II), or as Thomas of Celano had already written of a similar figure, "he shone forth as a resplendent star on a dark night, like the morning which spreads itself over the darkness." (Legenda I, No. 27.)

As a youth, St. Francis was expansive and high-strung, a lover of luxurious dress. He was accustomed to invite to magnificent banquets the friends he had chosen from amongst the elite and pleasure-loving young men of the town. He walked through the streets with them, singing gaily. But even at that time in his life he became known for the integrity of his moral life, his correctness in conversation, and his utter disdain of wealth. After his imprisonment in Perugia, which was followed by a long

illness, he felt himself, not without a certain sense of astonishment, completely transformed. However, as if he desired to flee from the hands of God, he went to Puglia on a military mission. On this journey he felt himself commanded by God in unmistakable terms to return to Assisi and learn there what he must do. After much wavering and many doubts, through divine inspiration and through having heard at solemn Mass that passage from the Gospels which speaks of the apostolic life, he understood at last that he, too, must live and serve Christ "according to the very words of the Holy Gospels." From that time on he undertook to unite himself to Christ alone and to make himself like unto Him in all things. In "all his efforts, public as well as private, he turned to the Cross of Our Lord, and from the moment he began to live as a soldier of Christ, the divine mysteries of the Cross shone around about him." (Thomas of Celano, *Treatise on Miracles*, No. 2.) Truly he was a brave soldier and Knight of Christ because of the nobility and the generosity of his heart; wherefore to prove that neither he nor his disciples were ever to be separated from Our Lord, he always had recourse to the Gospels as to an oracle whenever he had to make a decision on any matter. The rules of the Orders founded by him were made to agree most scrupulously with the same Gospels, and the religious life of his followers with the life of the Apostles. For this reason at the very beginning of his Rule, he wrote: "This is the life and rule of the Friars Minor, to observe the holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rule of the Friars Minor.)

In order not to prolong this subject unduly, let Us see now with what exercise of perfect virtue Francis prepared himself to follow the counsels of divine mercy and to make himself a capable instrument for the reformation of society.

Poverty of St. Francis

It is not hard to imagine—although We know it is a very difficult task to describe fitly in words—the love of evangelical poverty which burned within him. Every one knows how he,

because of the noble character bestowed on him by nature, loved to befriend the poor, and how, as St. Bonaventure has said, he was so filled with kindness that being "no mere hearer of the Gospel" he had decided never to deny help to the poor, especially if they in asking for assistance did so with the plea "for the love of God." Divine grace completed in him the work of nature and brought him to the highest perfection. Having on one occasion refused alms to a poor man, he forthwith repented and felt impelled to go and seek him out so that by the very abundance of his charity he might succor this man in his poverty.

On another occasion he was with a party of young men, singing in the streets after a gay banquet, when he stopped suddenly and, as if lifted outside himself by a wonderful vision, turned to his companions who had asked him if he was thinking of getting married and quickly replied, with some warmth, that they had guessed rightly because he proposed to take a spouse, and no one more noble, more rich, more beautiful than she could possibly be found, meaning, by these words, Poverty or the religious state which is founded on the profession of poverty. In fact, he had learned from Our Lord Jesus Christ Who, "although He was rich made Himself poor for us" (II Corinthians, 8, 9) that we, too, should become rich by His poverty, which is, in truth, divine wisdom; a wisdom which cannot be overthrown by the sophistries of human wisdom, a wisdom which alone can renew and restore all things. For Christ has said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; if thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." (Matthew, 5, 3, and Matthew, 19, 21.)

Poverty, which consists in the voluntary renunciation of every possession for reasons of love and through divine inspiration and which is quite the opposite of that forced and unlovable poverty preached by some ancient philosophers, was embraced by Francis with so much affection that he called her in loving accents, Lady, Mother, Spouse. In this regard, St. Bonaventure writes: "No one was ever so eager for gold as he was for poverty, nor more jealous in the custody of a treasure than he was of this pearl of the Gospel."

(Legenda Maior, Chap. VII.) Francis himself, recommending and prescribing for his followers in the Rule of his Order the exercise of this virtue in a very special manner, manifested the high esteem he had for poverty when he wrote these expressive words: "This is the sublimeness of the highest poverty which made you, my dearest brothers, heirs and kings of the Kingdom of Heaven, which made you poor in things of this world but enriched you with all virtue. This should be your heritage; to which, giving yourselves up entirely in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, nothing else will you desire forever under heaven." (Rule of Friars Minor, Chap. VI.)

The reason why Francis particularly loved poverty was because he considered it a special virtue of the Blessed Virgin, and because Jesus Christ on the Cross, even more especially chose Poverty for His spouse. Since then poverty has been forgotten by men and has appeared to the world both irksome and foreign to the spirit of the age.

Often when thinking of these things, St. Francis used to break down and shed bitter tears. And who would not be moved at this spectacle of a man who was so much in love with poverty that he appeared to his former boon companions and, to many others besides, bereft of his senses? What are We to say then of the generations following him which, even if they are very far from an understanding and the practice of evangelical perfection, are filled with admiration for so ardent a lover of poverty, an admiration that is continually on the increase and which is particularly noteworthy in the men of our own day? Dante anticipated this admiration of posterity in his poem "The Nuptials of St. Francis and Poverty," in which poem one finds it difficult what to admire more, the remarkable sublimity of the ideas expressed or the beauty and elegance of the style. (*Paradiso*, Canto XI.)

Humility of St. Francis

The high ideals and the generous love of poverty which possessed the mind and heart of Francis could not be satisfied by the

mere renunciation of external wealth. For who would ever succeed in acquiring true poverty, following the footsteps of Jesus Christ, if he did not make himself also poor in spirit by means of the virtue of humility? Francis well understood this truth; he never separated one virtue from the other and greeted them both warmly: "Holy Lady Poverty, may the Lord save you and your sister, Holy Humility. . . . Holy Poverty destroys all cupidity and avarice and anxiety for the things of this world. Holy Humility destroys pride, all men who are of the world, and all the things which are in the world." (Opusculum, *Salutatio Virtutum*, p. 20 et seq., edition 1904.)

The author of that Golden Book "The Imitation of Christ" describes St. Francis in a word when he calls him "humble." "For how much soever each one is in Thine eyes, O Lord, so much is he and no more, saith the humble St. Francis." (*Imitation of Christ*, Book III, Chap. 50.) In fact, it was the supreme wish of his heart to carry himself always with humility as the least and last amongst men. Therefore, from the very beginning of his conversion, he ardently desired to be looked down upon and to be despised by all. Later on in life, although he became the founder, the writer of their Rule, and the Father of the Friars Minor, he insisted that one of his followers should become the superior and master on whom even he was to depend. At the earliest possible moment, steeling himself against the prayers and wishes of his disciples, he desired to give up the supreme government of his Order "in order to practice the virtue of holy humility" and to remain "with her till death, living more humbly than any other friar." (Thomas of Celano, Legenda, Chap. II, No. 143.)

Cardinals and great lords often offered him hospitality but he abruptly refused all these invitations; and though he exhibited the greatest esteem for all men and rendered each man every possible deference, he looked upon himself as a sinner, considering himself as only one amongst many sinners. In fact, he believed himself the greatest of all sinners. He was accustomed to say that

if the mercy shown him by God had been extended any other sinner, the latter would have become ten times holier than he.

To God alone must be attributed whatever was found in him of goodness and beauty, for from God only was it derived. For this reason he tried in every possible way to hide those privileges and graces, especially the Stigmata of Our Lord which were imprinted on his body, which might have gained for him the esteem and praise of men. When at times he was praised, either in public or in private, he not only refused to accept such praise but protested he was worthy only of contempt and abuse and was really saddened thereby. Finally, what must We say of the fact that he thought so humbly of himself that he did not consider himself worthy to be ordained a priest?

On this selfsame foundation of humility he desired that his Order of the Friars Minor should be founded and built. He repeatedly taught his followers, in exhortations begotten of a truly marvelous wisdom, that they should glory in nothing, and above all not in their acquisition of virtues or in the possession of divine grace. He admonished them, too, and even, on occasion, reproved those Friars who because of their duties as preachers, men of letters, philosophers, superiors of convents and provinces, were exposed to the dangers of vain glory. It would take too long to go into details: this is enough to prove our point that St. Francis, following the example and words of Christ, considered humility in his followers the distinctive mark of his Order—namely, he insisted that his disciples be called "Minors," and the superiors of his Order "Ministers." He did this in order both to make use of the very language of the Gospels which he had promised to observe and to make his disciples understand by the name which they bore that they must go to the school of the humble Christ in order to learn humility.

Obedience and Fidelity to Church

We have seen how the Seraphic Father, motivated by the ideal of perfect poverty which had taken complete possession of his

soul, made himself so small and humble as to obey others (it would be better to say almost everyone) with the very simplicity of a child, for the reason that he who does not deny himself and give up his own will, certainly cannot be said to have renounced all things or to have become humble of heart. St. Francis by his vow of obedience consecrated gladly and submitted fully his will, the greatest gift which God has bestowed on human nature, to the will of the Vicar of Jesus Christ.

What evil they do and how far from a true appreciation of the Man of Assisi are they who, in order to bolster up their fantastic and erroneous ideas about him, imagine such an incredible thing as that Francis was an opponent of the discipline of the Church, that he did not accept the dogmas of the Faith, that he was the precursor and prophet of that false liberty which began to manifest itself at the beginning of modern times and which has caused so many disturbances both in the Church and in civil society! That he was in a special manner obedient and faithful in all things to the hierarchy of the Church, to this Apostolic See, and to the teachings of Christ, the Herald of the Great King proved both to Catholics and non-Catholics, by the admirable example of obedience which he always gave. It is a fact proved by contemporary historical documents, which are worthy of all credence, that he held in veneration the clergy, and loved with a great affection all who were in Holy Orders. "As a man who was truly Catholic and apostolic" (Thomas of Celano, Legenda, Chap. I, No. 62), he constantly insisted in his sermons, that "inviolable fidelity should always be shown towards the Church, and that the priests who by their ministry bring into being the sublime Sacrament of the Lord, should therefore be held in the highest reverence." (Julian a Spira, *Life of St. Francis*, No. 28.) "He also taught that the doctors of the law of God and all the orders of clergy should be shown the utmost respect at all times." That which he taught to the people from the pulpit he insisted on much more strongly amongst his Friars. We may read of this in his famous last testament and, again, at the very point of death he admonished them about this with great insistence; namely, that

in the exercise of the sacred ministry they should always obey the bishops and the clergy and should live togerher with them as it behooves children of peace.

Devotion Towards Roman Pontiff

The most important side of his obedience, however, is shown by the fact that as soon as the Seraphic Patriarch had drawn up and written out the rules of his Order, he delayed not even an instant in presenting himself personally, together with his first eleven disciples, to Innocent III, in order to gain the Pope's approval of his Rules. That Pontiff of Immortal Memory, moved deeply by the words and the presence of the humble *Poverello*, embraced Francis with great affection and, divinely inspired, sanctioned the Rules presented to him. He also gave to Francis and to his co-laborers the faculty to preach penance. History attests that Honorius III added a new confirmation to this Rule, after it had been somewhat modified, in answer to the prayers of St. Francis.

The Seraphic Father commanded that the Rule and the Life of the Friars Minor should be the following: To observe the "holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ" living in obedience without possessing any property and in all chastity, and this not according to one's own whims, or individual interpretation of the the Rule, but according to the commands of the Roman Pontiffs, canonically elected. For those who eagerly longed "to follow this manner of life . . . they had to be: first diligently examined by the clergy concerning their Catholic Faith and their reception of the Sacraments of the Church, and whether they believed all these things and were firm in their intention to profess them until the end of life." Those who had already become members of the Order must likewise do nothing in any way contrary to all this, except it be "according to the mandate of Our Lord, the Pope." To the clerics of the Order it is prescribed that they celebrate the Divine Office according to the calendar of the Roman Church; to the Friars in general it was commanded that they

should not preach in the territory of a Bishop without his permission, and that they should not enter, even for reasons of their ministry, the convents of Sisters without a special faculty from the Apostolic See. No less reverence and docility towards the Apostolic See is shown by the words that St. Francis uses in commanding that a Cardinal Protector should be appointed for the Order: "In obedience, I enjoin the Ministers to ask the Lord Pope for one of the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church to be the guide, protector and corrector of this Brotherhood; so that subordinate at all times and submissive, at the feet of the same Roman Church, and thus established in the Catholic Faith, we shall observe, as we have promised to do, the holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rule of Friars Minor, *passim.*)

His Purity and Charity

We must speak also of the "beauty and cleanliness of purity" which the Seraphic Father "loved singularly," of that chastity of soul and body which he kept and defended even to the maceration of his own flesh. We have already seen that as a young man, although gay and fashionable, he abhorred everything sinful, even in word. When later on he cast aside the vain pleasures of this world, he began to repress the demands of his senses with great severity. Thus at times when he found himself moved or likely to be influenced by sensual feeling, he did not hesitate to throw himself into a bush of thorns or, in the very depths of winter, to plunge into the icy waters of a stream.

It is also well known that Our Saint, desiring to call back men so that they would conform their lives to the teachings of the Gospel, used to exhort them "to love and fear God and to do penance for their sins." (Legend of the Three Companions, No. 33 et seq.) Moreover, he preached penance by example. He wore a hair shirt, he was clothed in a poor rough tunic, went about barefoot, he slept resting his head on a stone or on the trunk of a tree, ate so little that it was barely sufficient to keep him from dying of starvation. He even mixed ashes and water

with his food in order to destroy its taste. He passed the greater part of the year in fasting. Besides all this, no matter whether he was well or ill he treated his body with the greatest severity, and he used to call his body "my brother the ass"; nor could he be induced to give himself any relief or rest, not even when, as during the last years of his life, he was suffering greatly, the sufferings of one nailed to a cross, for he had become like unto Christ because of the stigmata which he bore. Neither did he neglect to inculcate austerity of life in his disciples, and in this only did the teachings of the Holy Patriarch differ from his own actions, he advised them to moderate a too excessive abstinence or punishment of the body.

Is there any one who cannot see that all these virtues proceeded from the one and same fountain of divine love? In truth, as Thomas of Celano writes, "He was ever afire with divine love and longed to perform deeds of great heroism; walking with a strong heart in the way of the Divine Commandments, he eagerly desired to reach the highest perfection" (Legenda, Chap. I, No. 55); wherefore there were those who "seeing him raised so rapidly to a state of intoxication of divine love" burst into tears (Legend of the Three Companions, No. 21). This love of God he poured out in love for his neighbor, and conquering himself loved with a special tenderness the poor and, amongst the poor, the most miserable of all, the lepers, whom as a youth he had so abhorred; he dedicated both himself and his disciples completely to their care and service. He also wished that a brotherly love similar to his own should reign amongst his disciples; because of this wish of his, the Franciscan Brotherhood grew to be "a noble edifice of charity, from the living stones of which, gathered from every part of the world, there was built a dwelling for the Holy Ghost." (Thomas of Celano, Legenda, Chap. I, No. 28 et seq.)

It is Our pleasure, Venerable Brothers, to detain you somewhat more at length in a study of these his sublime virtues, for the reason that, in our times, many infected by the false spirit of secularism, habitually attempt to strip our saintly heroes of the true light and glory of their sanctity. These writers view our

saints merely as models of human excellence or as the professors of an empty spirit of religion, praising and magnifying them exclusively because of what they have done for the progress of the arts and sciences, or because of certain works of mercy which they have accomplished and which have proved helpful to the fatherland and to mankind. We do not cease to wonder how an admiration for St. Francis of this kind, so false and even contradictory in itself, can in any way help his modern admirers who devote their lives to the search for riches and pleasure or who, decked out in finery, frequent public places, dances and theatres, or who roll in the very mud of voluptuousness, who ignore and cast aside the laws of Christ and His Church. In this context the following warning is very significant: "He who pretends to admire the good works of the saints, must at the same time admire the homage and love due to God. Therefore either imitate that which you praise or do not permit yourself to praise that which you do not care to imitate. He who admires the good works of the saints must also distinguish himself by the holiness of his own life." (Roman Breviary, 7th of November, Sermon on the Martyrs.)

Work of St. Francis

St. Francis, trained in the manly virtues We have written about, was called providentially to a work of reform for the salvation of his contemporaries and to assist in the work of the Church Universal.

In the Church of St. Damian where he was accustomed to pray, he heard three times a voice from Heaven saying: "Go Francis, rebuild my house which is falling down." (St. Bonaventure, Legenda, Chap. II.) But he, because of that deep humility which made him think himself incapable of accomplishing any great work whatsoever, did not understand the meaning of these mysterious words. Innocent III, however, discovered their import through the miraculous vision in which Francis was shown to him in the act of supporting on his shoulders the Church

of the Lateran, which was falling to the ground. The Pope then understood clearly that the mission of St. Francis was a very special one, given to him by a most merciful God.

The Seraphic Father founded two Orders, one for men and the other for women, both made up of aspirants to evangelical perfection. He then began a visit to the cities of Italy announcing, either personally or through the first disciples who had come to him, the foundation of his two Orders, preaching penance to the people in few but fiery words, gathering by this ministry and by his words and example almost unbelievable fruits. In all the places where he went to perform the functions of his apostolic ministry the people and clergy came out in procession to meet Francis, and there was much ringing of bells, singing of popular songs, and waving of olive branches. Persons of every age, sex, and condition flocked to him and, by day and night, surrounded the house where he lived so that they might have a chance of seeing him when he went out, of touching him, speaking to him, or listening to him. No one, even if he were grown grey in habits of vice and sin; could resist the preaching of the saint. Very many people, even some of mature age, vied with one another in giving up all their earthly goods for love of the evangelical life. Entire cities of Italy, reborn to a new moral life, placed themselves under the direction of Francis. The number of his sons grew beyond measure. Such was the enthusiasm which filled all to follow in his footsteps that the Seraphic Patriarch himself was often obliged to dissuade many and turn aside from the proposal to leave the world both men and women who were willing and ready to give up their conjugal rights and the joys of domestic life.

Meanwhile, the principal desire which filled these new preachers of penance was to help bring back peace not only to individuals but to families, cities, and even nations, torn by interminable wars and steeped in blood. If at Assisi, Arezzo, Bologna, and in many other cities and countries it was possible to bring about a general era of peace, at times confirmed even by solemn treaties,

it was due altogether to the superhuman power of the eloquence of these rough men.

Beneficial Effects of Third Order

In this work of reform and of bringing about a universal peace, the Third Order assisted greatly. The Third Order is an institution which was altogether a new idea at that time, for while it possesses the spirit of a religious order, it does not oblige its members to take vows but attempts to offer to both men and women living in the world, the means not only of observing the laws of God but of attaining Christian perfection. The Rules of this new Sodality may be reduced to the following principal articles: No one was accepted as a member unless they were of an unquestioned Catholic faith and obedient in all things to the Church; the manner of receiving candidates from each of the sexes into the Order; admission to religious profession was permitted after a year of novitiate, subject to the consent of the wife in the case of husbands and of the husband in the case of wives; love of purity and poverty, especially in the use of clothes, and of modesty in feminine attire; that the Tertiaries should abstain from feasting, from immodest shows and balls; abstinence and fasting; confession and communion three times a year, taking care to make peace with every one beforehand and to restore the goods rightly belonging to others; not to bear arms except in defense of the Roman Church, of the Christian faith, and of one's own country, or with the consent of one's Minister; the recitation of the canonical hours and other prayers; the duty of making a last will and testament three months after admission into the Order; to restore as soon as possible peace amongst one's brethren or amongst those outside the Order if any trouble had arisen; what to do in case the rights and privileges of the Sodality had been violated; not to take an oath except in case of urgent necessity recognized by the Apostolic See. To these rules were added others of no less importance; for example, on the duty of hearing Mass; of attending meetings called on certain fixed days; on the giving of alms

by each according to his ability to help the poor, and especially, the sick; on the performing of the last rites for dead members; on the manner of exchanging visits in case of illness; on the manner of bringing back to the ways of virtue those who had fallen or were obstinate in sin; on the duty of not refusing the offices and functions assigned to each and to fulfill these with care; on the manner of settling disputes.

We have dwelt on these matters somewhat in detail so as to show how Francis either by his own apostolate or by that of his disciples and, by the institution of the Third Order, laid the foundations of a new social order built on lines in strict conformity with the very spirit of the Gospels. Omitting everything in these Rules which relates to the religious life and to spiritual formation, even though these matters are of primary importance, every one can understand how from the other prescriptions of the Rules there should result such an order both in public and private life as to bring about a new type of civic intercourse. We will not call this merely a brotherly fellowship based on the practice of Christian perfection, but rather a shield of the rights of the poor and the weak against the abuses of the rich and the powerful, and all this without any prejudice to good order and justice. From the association of the Tertiaries with the clergy there necessarily resulted this happy consequence, that new members were permitted to participate in the same exemptions and immunities which the latter already enjoyed. The Tertiaries no longer were called upon to take the so-called solemn oath of vassalage, neither were they conscripted for military service, nor had they to go to war or to bear arms, for in this the Rule of the Third Order was opposed to the feudal law, and by their membership in the Order they achieved, too, a liberty which was otherwise impossible under the conditions of servitude under which they had lived. When they were set on and harassed by those whose every interest it was to cause conditions to return to their former state, they had as defenders and patrons the Popes Honorius III and Gregory IX who overcame every obstacle put in their way and prohibited such attacks by the severest punishments.

From this source, therefore, there arose that profound impulse towards a saving reform of human society, towards that vast expansion and growth amongst Christian nations which had its beginnings in the new Order of which Francis was the Father and Teacher. Innocence of life, too, blossomed forth once more in union with the spirit of penance. From this source arose that ardent zeal which impelled not only Pontiffs, Cardinals, and Bishops to accept the badge of the Third Order, but also Kings and Princes who imbibed, together with the Franciscan spirit, evangelical wisdom and, from amongst whom, some rose even to the glory of sainthood. The noblest virtues, too, came back into public esteem and honor. In a word, the "face of the earth itself was changed."

His Mission to the Heathen

St. Francis, "a man who was truly Catholic and apostolic," in the same admirable fashion that he had attended to the reformation of the faithful, so likewise set about personally and commanded his disciples to occupy themselves before everything else with the conversion of the heathen to the Faith and Law of Christ. Nor need We dwell at length on a subject so well known to all. Moved by an ardent desire to spread the Gospel and even to undergo martyrdom, he did not hesitate to go to Egypt and there bravely to appear in the very presence of the Sultan. In the annals of the Church, too, are not the names of those numerous apostles of the Gospel who, from the beginning, that is to say, in the springtime of the Order of Minors, found martyrdom in Syria and Morocco recorded in words of highest praise? With the passing of time this apostolate has been developed with much zeal and often with great shedding of blood by the numerous Franciscan brotherhood, for many lands inhabited by the heathen have been entrusted to their care through the express commands of the Roman Pontiffs.

The Glory of St. Francis

No one will therefore marvel that throughout the whole period of seven hundred years just ending the memory of so many benefits derived from him has never been lost at any time or in any place. On the contrary We see that his life and work, which as Dante writes "can be sung better by those who enjoy the glories of heaven" than by human tongue, has raised and exalted him century after century in the devotion and admiration of all so that not only is his greatness increasing in the Catholic world because of a remarkable appreciation of his great sanctity, but he is also surrounded by a certain civic cult and glory by reason of which the very name of Assisi has become well known to the peoples of the whole world.

Shortly after his death, churches dedicated to the Seraphic Father and admirable for the beauty of their architecture and treasures of art began to rise, due to the wishes of the people to honor him. The most famous artists competed one with another as to who should succeed in portraying with the greatest perfection and beauty the likeness and life of Francis in paintings, in statues, in engravings, and in mosaics. Thus Santa Maria degli Angeli was built on that very plain where Francis "poor and humble entered rich into heaven." Churches, too, were built at the place of his glorious burial as well as on the hills of Assisi, and to these pilgrims flocked from everywhere in parties or in large groups, in order to recall for the benefit of their own souls the memory of so great a saint and to admire these immortal monuments of art. Moreover, there arose to sing the praises of the Man of Assisi, as We have already seen, a poet who has no equal, Dante Alighieri. He was followed by others both in Italy and elsewhere who brought glory to literature by exalting the greatness of the Saint.

Modern Franciscan Studies

Especially in our own days francescana have been studied more profoundly by the learned and a great number of works printed in various languages have seen the light of day. The talents,

too, of artists have succeeded in arousing such an admiration for St. Francis amongst our contemporaries that it is almost limitless, despite the fact that sometimes this admiration is not based on a true understanding of the Saint. Some admired in him the character of the poet by which he so wonderfully expressed the sentiments of his soul, and his famous Canticle became the delight of learned men who recognized in it one of the first great poems of the early Italian language. Others were taken by his love of nature, for he not only seemed fascinated by the majesty of inanimate nature, by the splendor of the stars, by the beauty of his Umbrian mountains and valleys, but, like Adam before his fall in the Garden of Eden, he even spoke to the animals themselves. He appears to have been joined to them in a kind of brotherhood and they were obedient to his every wish. Others praised his love of country because in him Our Italy, which boasts the great honor of having given him birth, found a more fruitful source of graces than any other country. Others, finally, honor him for that truly singular and catholic love with which he embraced all men. All of this is quite admirable but it is the least that is to be praised in Our Saint, and it all must be understood in a correct sense. If we stop at these aspects of his life and look upon them as the most important, or change their import so as to justify either our own morbid ideas or excuse our false opinions, or maintain some of our prejudices, it is certain that we would not possess a genuine picture of the real Francis. As a matter of fact, by his practice of all the virtues in a heroic manner, by the austerity of his life and his preaching of penance, by his manifold and restless activity for the reformation of society, the figure of Francis stands forth in all its completeness, proposed to us not so much for the admiration as for the imitation of Christian peoples. As the Herald of the Great King, his purposes were directed to persuading men to conform their lives to the dictates of evangelical sanctity and to the love of the Cross, not that they should become mere lovers of flowers, birds, lambs, fishes or hares. He seemed filled with a great and tender affection for animals, and "no matter how small they were" he called them

all "by the name of brother and sister"—a love which if it is kept within bounds is assuredly not prohibited by any law. This love of animals was due to no other cause than his own love of God, which moved him to love these creatures because he knew that they had the same origin as he (St. Bonaventure, Legenda, Chap. VIII, No. 6), and in them he perceived the goodness of God. St. Francis, too, "saw the image of the Beloved imprinted on all things, and he made of these things a ladder whereby to reach His throne." (Thomas of Celano, Legenda, Chap. II, No. 165.)

Why then forbid Italians to glory in him who was an Italian, who even in the sacred liturgy is called the "light of the Fatherland?" (Breviary of Friars Minor.) Why prevent the defenders of the rights of the people preaching the love of Francis towards all men and especially towards the poor? The former admirers of St. Francis, impelled by an excessive love of their own nation, should take care not to boast of him as a mere sign and banner of their new-born love of country, thus lessening his glorious title of "Catholic Champion"; the latter should take care not to hold him up as a precursor and defender of errors, which of course he was very far from being. May it please Heaven that they who, through devotion to the Saint either find pleasure in these lesser praises of the Man of Assisi or labor with zeal to promote the success of this Centenary, all worthy of Our praise, may, by the happy recurrence of his feast, draw from his life strong motives to examine more profoundly the true picture of this great imitator of Christ and thus themselves aspire to higher ideals.

Fruits of Present Centenary

Meanwhile, Venerable Brothers, We have good reasons for rejoicing because We see how through the united efforts of all good men to celebrate fitly the memory of the Holy Patriarch during this year which marks the Seven Hundredth Anniversary of his death, both religious and civic solemnities are being prepared in every part of the world and especially in that very district

which, while living, he honored by his presence, by the light of his sanctity and the glory of his miracles. It is with great pleasure, too, that We see you giving in this an example to your own clergy and people. From this hour onwards there is presented to Our soul, or better still We can almost see with Our very eyes, the great throngs of pilgrims who will visit Assisi and the other nearby sanctuaries of verdant Umbria, the rocky crags of Verna, the sacred hills that look out on the valley of the Rieti, all spots where Francis seems to live on, giving Us even now an example of his virtues, from where the pious pilgrims can scarcely return home without being more and more filled with the Franciscan spirit. To quote Leo XIII: "Concerning the honors that are being prepared for St. Francis, it should be borne in mind, that above all, these honors will be agreeable to him to whom they are given only when they have been made fruitful by the one who actually offers them. In this then alone can We hope for lasting fruits, when those men who admire his great virtue seek to copy in some way this man, and in imitating him make themselves better." (Encyclical *Auspicato*, 17 Sept., 1882.) Some will say, perhaps, that to restore Christian society another Francis is needed today. But We say, do what you can to make men take up again with renewed zeal the ancient Francis as their teacher of piety and sanctity; do what you can that they imitate and follow the example which he has left them, that they accept him as a man who was "a mirror of virtue, a path of righteousness, a rule of morals." (Breviary of Friars Minor.) And if this is done, will it not in itself be enough to heal and even to stop the corruption of our own times?

Exhortation to Franciscan Brotherhood

First of all, then, the many children belonging to the Three Orders must reproduce in themselves the glorious image of their Father and Founder. They being now "established in all parts of the world"—as Gregory IX wrote to the Blessed Agnes, daughter of the King of Bohemia—"every day the Almighty is in many ways glorified by them." (*De Conditoris Ommium*, 9 May, 1238.)

On the other hand We sincerely rejoice that the religious of the First Order, which is called Franciscan, in spite of the many unseemly vexations and spoliations which they have had to suffer, like gold which has passed through a crucible, have come to realize each day more and more their pristine splendor. On the other hand, We no less sincerely desire that they, by the example of real penance and humility which they give, shall become living protests against the concupiscence of the flesh and the pride of life so widespread amongst us. May it be their peculiar function to call back their fellowmen to the Gospel law of life. With much less difficulty they will attain this end if they themselves observe the Rule which their Founder has called "the book of life, the hope of holiness, the substance of the Gospel, the way of perfection, the key of paradise, the pledge of an eternal alliance." (Thomas of Celano, Legenda, Chap. II, No. 208.) The Seraphic Patriarch will not cease to look down from heaven and bless the mystical vine which he with his own hands planted, and to nourish and strengthen its manifold roots with the moisture and sap of brotherly love, so that all may become "one heart and one soul," so that all may give themselves up in all fervor to the restoration of Christian society.

The holy virgins of the Second Order who participate "in that angelic life which was made known by St. Clare", by the snowlike whiteness of their souls, should continue to spread abroad, like lilies planted in the Garden of the Lord, a sweet fragrance so pleasing to God. Through their prayers, may sinners in much larger numbers hasten back to the merciful arms of Christ Our Lord, and may Our Holy Mother the Church feel the increasing joy of seeing her children restored to divine grace and to the hope of eternal life.

Exhortation to Third Order

We turn finally to the Tertiaries, both to those who are living together in regular communities and those who live in the world. They, too, should try, with truly apostolic zeal, to promote the spiritual welfare of Christian peoples. Their apostolate which,

at its origins, made them worthy to be called by Gregory IX "soldiers of Christ and new Maccabees," will today also, with no less efficacy, succeed in promoting the common good, provided they, although they have grown in numbers all over the world, become like their Father, St. Francis, by giving proof of innocence of life and integrity of morals.

What Our Predecessors, Leo XIII in the Letter *Auspicato* and Benedict XV in the Encyclical *Sacra Propediem*, wrote to all the Bishops of the Catholic world and which greatly pleased them, We repeat and recommend to your pastoral zeal. We expect that you will favor in every way within your power the Third Order of St. Francis, either by yourselves or by means of cultured priests and good preachers, teaching the aims of this Order of men and women who live in the world, how worthy it is of popular esteem, how easy it is to enter this Sodality, to observe its holy rules, and how abundant are the indulgences and privileges which the Tertiaries enjoy. Finally, make known the great blessings which flow from the Third Order to individuals and to the communities where they live. You should urge those who have not yet given their names to this immortal band of soldiers to do so this year. As regards those who cannot, because of their age, join the Third Order, they should be enrolled as prospective Tertiaries so that from childhood they may become accustomed to the holy discipline of this Order.

It seems that God in His kindness and mercy has ordained that Our Pontificate shall not pass without the happiest fruits for the Catholic Church, judging from the great and holy events in which We have so often been called upon to participate. We, therefore, view with great pleasure the preparations which are being made to celebrate this solemn Centenary of St. Francis who "in his life propped up the house and in his days fortified the Temple." (Ecclesiasticus, 50, 1.) We take all the more pleasure in this festival since from Our earliest years We have with great devotion venerated St. Francis as Our patron. We have numbered Ourselves, too, amongst his children, having received the badge of the Third Order. In this year, therefore, which is the Seventh

Centenary of the death of the Seraphic Father, the Catholic world, and in particular Our nation, Italy, should receive, through the intercession of St. Francis, so great an abundance of blessings that it will remain a year forever memorable in the history of the Church.

In the meantime, Venerable Brothers, We pray for you all heavenly favors and as a pledge of Our love to you, to your clergy, and to your people, from the depths of Our heart, We impart, in Our Lord, the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, on the Thirtieth of April of the year 1926, the fifth of Our Pontificate.

PIUS XI, POPE.

THE PROMOTION OF TRUE RELIGIOUS UNITY

Encyclical Letter

(Mortalium animos)

of

His Holiness, Pope Pius XI

Issued January 6, 1928

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on
"True Religious Unity"

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Reverend R. A. McGowan

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ENCYCLICAL LETTER

The Promotion of True Religious Unity

TO OUR VENERABLE BRETHREN, PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS AND TO ALL ORDINARIES IN PEACE AND COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE.

PIUS XI, Pontifex Maximus.

Venerable Brethren: Greetings and Apostolic Benediction:

The will to strengthen and to diffuse for the common good of human society that brotherhood in which we are all closely united by the bonds of a common nature and origin has never perhaps so taken hold of men's minds as in our times.

When nations do not fully enjoy the blessings of peace and old and new discords break forth into mutiny and conflict; when indeed it is impossible to settle the numerous controversies that strike at the peace and prosperity of peoples without the harmonious action of those who govern states and rule and promote their interests, it is easy to understand, and all the more so now that all accept the unity of mankind, how it is that, impelled by the desire for universal brotherhood, many should be anxious that the various nations stand ever more closely together.

Some seek to accomplish a thing not unlike this in matters that concern the ordinances of the New Law which Christ brought to us. Convinced that rarely indeed do men lack all sense of religion, they seem to draw from this reason to hope that without great difficulty it may come about that all peoples, no matter how different their reli-

gions, will stand fraternally together in the profession of a few doctrines which will serve as a kind of common foundation for the spiritual life.

Therefore they are accustomed to call congresses, reunions and meetings which are attended by many and they invite there indiscriminately, to decide the question, infidels of all kinds and Christians alike and even those who have miserably apostatized from Christ or who intransigently and tenaciously deny the divinity of His person and mission.

Certainly such movements as these cannot gain the approval of Catholics. They are founded upon the false opinions of those who say that since all religions equally unfold and signify, though not in the same way, the native, inborn feeling in us all through which we are borne toward God and humbly recognize His rule, therefore, all religions are more or less good and praiseworthy.

The followers of this theory are not only deceived and mistaken but since they repudiate the true religion by attacking it in its very essence, they move step by step to naturalism and atheism. Hence it clearly follows that anyone who gives assent to such theories and undertakings utterly abandons divinely revealed religion.

When the question of promoting unity among Christians is under consideration many are easily deceived by the semblance of good. Is it not right, it is said repeatedly, indeed is it not the duty

of all who call upon Christ's name to cease mutual recriminations and join together in ties of mutual charity? For who would dare to say that he loves Christ when he will not strive to his utmost to attain that which Christ prayed for to His Father when He asked that His disciples might "be one?" [1]

And did not Christ Himself wish His disciples to bear the sign and be distinguished by the characteristic that they love one another: "By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another?" [2] Would, they add, that all Christians were one, that they might drive out the evil of irreligion which every day spreads more widely and threatens to overturn the Gospel.

These and like arguments are brought forward and amplified by those who call themselves Pan-Christians. No longer are they confined to small and scattered groups but, they grow, so to speak, by whole phalanxes and unite themselves in extensive organizations which, although the members are imbued with different faiths, non-Catholics for the most part direct.

The work itself is promoted with such zeal that it has gained a great variety of followers and has even ensnared the minds of Catholics with the entrancing hope of attaining a union that would seem to meet the will of Holy Mother Church to whom nothing is more hallowed than the recall

[1] John 17, 21.
[2] John 13, 35.

and the return of her wandering children to her bosom. Yet beneath the coaxing words there is concealed an error so great that it would destroy utterly the foundations of the Catholic Faith.

Moved by the consciousness of Our Apostolic office to guard the flock of the Lord from error, We invoke your zeal, Venerable Brethren, to ward off this evil. We are convinced that through your writings and your words, the principles and the reasons We shall expound will more quickly reach the people. They will then understand what to think and what to do about the effort made to coalesce in one body, through some sort of a pact, all who call themselves Christians.

We were created by God, the Maker of all things, to know Him and serve Him; our Maker has, therefore, full right that we serve Him. For the governance of mankind God could have prescribed only the one law of nature which He wrote upon the mind of man at his creation and thenceforward He could have ruled the steps of this law under His customary providence.

Instead He preferred to give us the commandments to prepare us, and in the course of the centuries from the origin of mankind to the coming and teaching of Christ Jesus He Himself taught man the duties that rational beings owe their Creator. "God, who, at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days hath spoken to us by His Son." [3]

[3] Hebr. 1, 1 seq.

From this it follows that the true religion cannot be other than that which is founded in the revealed word of God. This revelation, inaugurated at the beginning of time and continued in the Old Testament, Christ Jesus Himself perfected in the New. Now if God has spoken, and that He has indeed spoken is proven by history, there is no one who does not see that it is man's duty to believe God absolutely in His revelations and to obey Him without qualification in His commandments. Precisely that we might rightly fulfill both duties for the glory of God and our own salvation, the only Begotten Son of God founded His Church upon earth.

They, therefore, who profess themselves Christians cannot, We think, but believe in Christ's establishment of one Church and only one. Yet when one asks what that church ought by the will of its Founder to be, then not all agree. Indeed a great many deny, for example, that Christ's Church ought to be visible; at least in the sense that it should stand forth as one body of faithful united in one identical doctrine and under one authority and rule. On the contrary they understand by a visible Church nothing but a society formed by various Christian communities even though these adhere to different and even mutually contradictory doctrines.

Instead Christ Our Lord founded His Church a perfect society, external of its own nature and perceived by the senses, which would pursue for all future time the task of saving mankind

through the guidance of one head,[4] through being taught by a living voice,[5] and through the dispensation [6] of the sacraments, as fountains of the grace of Heaven. Wherefore, He likened His Church to a kingdom,[7] to a house,[8] to a sheepfold,[9] to a flock.[10]

So marvelously constituted a Church could not cease altogether and be extinguished when its Founder and the Apostles who first propagated it had died, for it had been commanded to lead to eternal salvation all men without distinction of time or place: "Going therefore forth, teach all nations." [11] Would the Church lack power or efficacy in the perpetual fulfillment of its work when Christ Himself, as He solemnly promised, is with it forever? "Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." [12] Necessarily, therefore, the Church of Christ ought not only to exist today and always, but still more, be the same as it was in the Apostolic Ages, unless we should wish to utter the absurdity that Christ Our Lord either was not adequate to His purpose or had erred when He asserted that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." [13]

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[4] Matth. 16, 18 seq.; Lu. 22, 32; John 21, 15-17.
[5] Mark 16, 15.
[6] John 3, 5; 6, 48-59; 20, 22, seq.; cf. Matth. 18, 18, etc.
[7] Matth. 13.
[8] Cf. Matth. 16, 18.
[9] John 10, 16.
[10] John 21, 15-17.
[11] Matth. 28, 19.
[12] Matth. 28, 20.
[13] Matth. 16, 18.

And here there is presented the opportunity to set forth and remove a falsity upon which, it seems, this whole question hinges and from which is drawn the multiple effort of the non-Catholics who strive, as We have said, for the confederation of the Christian churches.

The authors of this plan are in the habit of quoting the words of Christ: "That ye all may be one. . . . There shall be one fold and one shepherd," [14] yet in the sense that these words express a desire and a prayer of Christ Jesus that has thus far lacked all effect. They contend that the unity of faith and governance which is the sign of the true and one Church of Christ, has almost never existed up to this time and does not exist today; it can be wished for and perhaps sometime it can be obtained through common submission of the will but meanwhile it must be considered a fiction.

They say, moreover, that the Church by its very nature is divided into parts, that it consists of many churches or particular communities which are separated among themselves and although they have certain points of doctrine in common differ in others; and that at most the Church was the one Church and only Church between the apostolic era and the First Ecumenical Councils.

Therefore, they say, the controversies and old differences of opinion which to this day divide the Christian name, should be completely put aside and with the remaining doctrines there should be

[14] John 17, 21; 10, 16.

formulated and proposed a common rule of faith in the profession of which all can know and feel themselves brothers. United by some sort of universal covenant, the multitude of churches or communities will then be in a position to oppose fruitfully and effectively the progress of unbelief. This, Venerable Brethren, is the more general opinion.

There are, however, some among them who assume and grant that Protestantism, as they call it, has rejected very inadvisedly certain articles of faith and certain rites of external worship that are fully acceptable and useful, which the Roman Church still preserves. But they add immediately that the Church has corrupted the early religion by adding to it and by proposing for belief certain doctrines that are not only foreign to but are opposed to the Gospel, among which they bring forward chiefly that of the primacy of jurisdiction assigned to Peter and his successors of the Roman See.

Among them are also a few, though a very few, who indulge the Roman pontiff with a primacy of honor or a certain jurisdiction or power which, however, they think is derived not from divine right but in a certain manner from the consent of the faithful. Others have even advanced so far as to wish the Pope, himself, to preside over their multi-colored conferences.

If, however, it is easy to find many non-Catholics preaching often of brotherly communion in Christ Jesus, you will indeed find none to whose

minds it would occur to submit themselves and obey the Vicar of Christ either as teacher or as ruler of the Church. Meanwhile they affirm that they would gladly treat with the Roman Church though upon the basis of equality of rights and as equals. If they could so treat, they do not seem to doubt but that an agreement might be entered into through which they would not be compelled to give up those opinions which are thus far the cause why they have wandered outside the one fold of Christ.

On such conditions it is clear that the Apostolic See cannot in any way participate in their reunions and that Catholics cannot in any way adhere or grant aid to such efforts. If they should do so, they would give authority to a false Christian religion completely foreign to the one Church of Christ. But could we suffer—which would be utterly iniquitous—the truth and indeed the divine revealed truth to be brought down to the level of bargains? For it is the safeguarding of revealed truth now that is at stake.

If Christ Jesus sent His apostles into the whole world to imbue all nations with the evangelical faith and that they might not err in anything desired that they be first taught all truth by the Holy Ghost,[15] could the teaching of the apostles disappear or even be darkened in a Church of which God Himself is the ruler and guardian?

And if Our Redeemer plainly said that His Gospel cared not for the Apostolic Ages alone

[15] John 16, 13.

but for all future generations could the content of the faith become in the passing of time so obscure and uncertain that it would today permit acceptance of contradictory opinions?

If that were true one must likewise say that the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles and the endless abiding of the Holy Ghost in the Church and the preaching of Jesus Christ have for these many centuries lost all efficacy and usefulness. But to affirm that, is blasphemy.

Moreover, when the only Begotten Son of God commanded His legates to teach all nations, He then bound all men with the duty to believe what was announced to them by "witnesses preordained of God." [16] He attached to His command the sanction, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned." [17] Now this double commandment of Christ, which must be observed, to teach and to believe so as to attain eternal salvation, cannot even be understood if the Church does not propose the evangelical doctrine entire and clear and if in the teaching of it, it is not free from all danger of error.

How far, indeed, do they wander from the way who think that a deposit of truth exists on earth but that one must seek it with such tiring labor and lengthy studies and disputes that hardly is the life of a man long enough to find it and master it. As if the most kind God had spoken

[16] Acts 10, 41.
[17] Mark 16, 16.

through the prophets and His only Begotten Son that a few only, and those already bowed down in years, might learn the truth that He has revealed through them, and not to give a teaching of faith and morals through which man would be ruled throughout the whole course of his life.

It might appear that the Pan-Christians, engaged in trying to confederate the churches, are pursuing the noble idea of increasing charity among all Christians. Yet how could charity harm faith?

All remember how John, the very Apostle of Charity, who in his Gospel seems to have opened the secrets of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and who always inculcated in the minds of his disciples the new commandment, "Love ye one another," had wholly forbidden them to have relations with those who did not profess entire and uncorrupted the teachings of Christ. "If any man cometh to you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house nor say to him, God speed you." [18] Since charity is founded in whole and sincere faith, the disciples of Christ must be united by the bond of unity in faith and by it as the chief bond.

How could a Christian covenant be imagined in which they who entered it could in matters of faith each retain, although contrary to those of others, their own opinions and judgments? Through what agreement could men of opposed

[18] II John 10.

opinions become one and the same society of the faithful?

How, for example, they who affirm that sacred tradition is a true source of divine revelation and they who deny it?

They who hold that an ecclesiastical hierarchy formed of bishops, priests and ministers is divinely constituted and they who assert that little by little it came into being to suit the conditions of time and events?

They who adore Christ really present in the Most Holy Eucharist by that wonderful change of bread and wine called transubstantiation and they who say that the Body of Christ is present there only through faith or through the sign and the virtue of the sacrament?

They who hold that in the Eucharist there is both sacrifice and sacrament and they who say that it is only a remembrance or commemoration of the Last Supper?

They who believe it good and meritorious to pray to the saints reigning with Christ, above all to Mary, Mother of God, and to venerate their images, and they who contend that such a form of worship is wrong because it draws from the honor due Jesus Christ, "the one mediator of God and men?" [19]

In such great differences of opinions we do not know how a road may be paved to the unity of the Church save alone through one teaching

[19] Cf. I Tim. 2, 5.

authority, one sole law of belief and one sole faith among Christians.

Moreover, we know how easy is the path from denial of this to the neglect of religion, or indifferentism, and to modernism which holds the very same error, to wit: dogmatic truth is not absolute but relative, it is proportionate to the various needs of times and places and to the various tendencies of the mind, since dogmatic truth is not contained in an unchanging revelation but is such that it accommodates itself to the life of men.

In matters of faith it is not permitted to make a distinction between fundamental and so-called non-fundamental articles of faith, as if the first ought to be held by all and the second the faithful are free to accept or not. The supernatural virtue of faith has as its formal cause the authority of God the Revealer, which suffers not such a division.

Therefore, as many as are of Christ give, for example, to the dogma of the Immaculate Conception the same faith they give to the mystery of the August Trinity and they believe in the Incarnation of the Word no differently than they believe in the infallible teaching power of the Pope, in the sense defined by the Vatican Ecumenical Council.

Not because the Church has defined and sanctioned truths by solemn decree of the Church at different times, and even in times near to us are

they therefore not equally certain and not equally to be believed. For has not God revealed them all?

The teaching authority of the Church, which by divine plan was established on earth that revealed truths might be preserved untouched forever, and quickly and safely come to the minds of men, is daily exercised by the Roman Pontiff and the bishops in communion with him.

Still it has the duty to proceed opportunely in defining points of faith with solemn rites and decrees, when there is a need to declare them to resist more effectively the errors and assaults of heretics or to impress upon the minds of the faithful clearer and more profound explanations of points of sacred doctrine.

However, in this extraordinary use of the teaching authority nothing is invented nor is anything new added to the sum of truths that are, at lease implicity, contained in the deposit of divine revelation that was entrusted by God to the Church. Instead points of faith are defined that could by chance still seem obscure to some or truths are established as matters of faith that for the first time were called into question.

Therefore, Venerable Brethren, it is clear why the Apostolic See has never permitted its children to take part in these congresses. The unity of Christians cannot be otherwise obtained than by securing the return of the separated to the one true Church of Christ from which they once unhappily withdrew. To the one true Church of Christ, We say, that stands forth before all and

that by the will of its Founder will remain forever the same as when He Himself established it for the salvation of all mankind.

The mystical Spouse of Christ has in the course of the centuries remained unspotted nor can it ever be contaminated. St. Cyprian says: "The Spouse of Christ cannot commit adultery; she is incorrupt and modest, she knows one house, she guards with chaste modesty the holiness of one room." [20] This same holy martyr marveled, and with reason, how anyone could think that "the unity which proceeds from the stability of God and is bound together by the sacraments of heaven could be torn asunder in the church or separated by the wills of the discordant." [21]

Since the Mystical Body of Christ, that is to say, the Church, is, like the physical body, a unity,[22] a compact thing closely joined together,[23] it would be false and foolish to say that Christ's Mystical Body could be composed of separated and scattered members. Whoever therefore is not united with it is not a member of it nor does he communicate with its Head Who is Christ.[24]

No one is found in the one Church of Christ and no one perseveres in it unless he acknowledges and accepts obediently the supreme authority of St. Peter and his legitimate successors. Did not the very ancestors of those who are entangled

[20] De Cath. Ecclesiae unitate, 6.
[21] Ibidem.
[22] I Cor. 12, 12.
[23] Eph. 4, 16.
[24] Cf. Eph. 5, 30; 1, 22.

in the errors of Photius and the Protestants obey the Roman bishop as the high shepherd of souls?

Children did, alas, abandon their father's house but the house did not therefore fall in ruins, supported as it was by the unceasing help of God. Let them return, then, to the common father of all. He has forgotten the unjust wrongs inflicted upon the Holy See and will receive them most lovingly. If, as they often say, they desire to be united with Us and with Ours, why do they not hasten to return to the Church, "the mother and mistress of all the followers of Christ?" [25]

Let them listen to Lactantius crying: "It is only the Catholic Church that retains the true worship. It is the fountain of truth, it is the household of the faith, it is the temple of God: if anyone does not enter it or if anyone departs from it, he is a stranger to the hope of life and salvation. Let no one deceive himself by continuous wranglings. Life and salvation are in the balance, which if not looked to carefully and diligently will be lost and destroyed." [26]

Let these separated children return to the Apostolic See established in this city which the Princes of the Apostles, Peter and Paul, consecrated with their blood, to this See, "the root and matrix of the Catholic Church," [27] not indeed with the idea or hope that "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth" [28]

[25] Conc. Lateran, IV, c.5.
[26] Divin. Instit. 4, 30, 11-12.
[27] S. Cypr. Ep. 48 ad Cornelium, 3.
[28] I Tim. 3, 15.

will abandon the integrity of the faith and bear their errors, but to subject themselves to its teaching authority and rule.

Would that what has not been granted to many of Our predecessors would be granted to Us, to embrace with the heart of a father the children over whom We mourn, separated by an evil discord from Us. May God Our Saviour "Who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" [29] hearken to our ardent prayer and vouchsafe to call back all wanderers to the unity of the Church!

In behalf of which lofty intention We invoke, and We ask that you invoke the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Divine Grace, conqueror of all heresies and Help of Christians, that soon may dawn that longed-for day when all will hear the voice of Her Divine Son, "keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." [30]

You know well, Venerable Brethren, how We desire their return; and We wish all Our children to know it and not only they of the Catholic world but all who are separated from Us. If they will ask in humble prayer the grace of God, there is no doubt but that they will come to recognize the one true Church of Jesus Christ and enter it, united with Us in perfect charity.

In expectation of this and as a sign of the favor of God and a witness of Our Fatherly benevolence, to you, Venerable Brethren, and to your

[29] I Tim. 2, 4.
[30] Eph. 4, 3.

clergy and people We lovingly bestow the Apostolic Blessing.

Given at Rome at St. Peter's the sixth of January, the Feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the year nineteen hundred and twenty-eight, the sixth of our Pontificate.

PIUS XI.

STUDY CLUB OUTLINE

✠

Text: Encyclical of Pius XI
Mortalium animos

(For additional reading matter use any good work on Catholic Apologetics)

Subjects for Discussion

1. Origin of the desire for international brotherhood.
2. Similar natural origin of the desire for religious unity.
3. Chief theory of those who seek confederation of churches in the name of unity.
4. Revelation in relation to true religious unity.
5. Christ's establishment of one indefectible, infallible church.
6. The Pan-Christian idea of the nature and history of the Church.
7. Possibility that a bargain among followers of different religious opinions would attain reaching a knowledge of Christ's teachings.
8. Exact type of conference with non-Catholic churches that is condemned.
9. Reasons for an unfailing Church.
10. Relation between charity and unity in faith.
11. Variety of beliefs among Christians in relation to unity.
12. Condition necessary for religious unity.
13. "Fundamental" and socalled "non-fundamental" articles of faith.
14. Manner of exercise of the teaching authority of the Church.
15. Unity of all in the Catholic Church, as Christ's answer to the need for unity.
16. The supreme authority of the successors of St. Peter.
17. The Pope's desire for unity.
18. Contrast between a confederation of churches reached through agreement upon "fundamentals," and unity in the faith as Christ revealed it.

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PIUS XI

BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE

POPE

TO THE PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS AND OTHER ORDINARIES IN PEACE AND COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE AND TO ALL THE FAITHFUL OF THE CATHOLIC WORLD ON

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OF YOUTH

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1936

Christian Education of Youth

Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children

Health and Apostolic Benediction

REPRESENTATIVE on earth of that divine Master who while embracing in the immensity of His love all mankind, even unworthy sinners, showed nevertheless a special tenderness and affection for children, and expressed Himself in those singularly touching words: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me," [1] We also on every occasion have endeavoured to show the predilection wholly paternal which We bear towards them, particularly by our assiduous care and timely instructions with reference to the Christian education of youth.

And so, in the spirit of the Divine Master, We have directed a helpful word, now of admonition, now of exhortation, now of direction, to youths and to their educators, to fathers and mothers, on various points of Christian education, with that solicitude which becomes the common Father of all the Faithful, with an insistence in season and out of season, demanded by our pastoral office and inculcated by the Apostle: "Be instant in season, out of season; reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine." [2] Such insistence is called for in these our times, when, alas, there is so great and deplorable an absence of clear and sound principles, even regarding problems the most fundamental.

Now this same general condition of the times, this ceaseless agitation in various ways of the problem of educational rights and systems in different countries, the desire expressed to Us with filial confidence by not a few of yourselves, Venerable Brethren, and by members of your flocks, as well as Our deep affection towards youth above referred to, move Us to turn more directly to this subject, if not to treat it in all its well-nigh inexhaustible range of theory and practice, at least to summarize its main principles,

[1] Marc., X, 14: *Sinite parvulos venir ad me.*

[2] *II Tim.*, IV, 2: *Insta opportune importune: argue, obsecr: increpa in omni patientia et doctrina.*

throw full light on its important conclusions, and point out its practical applications.

Let this be the record of Our Sacerdotal Jubilee which, with altogether special affection, We wish to dedicate to our beloved youth, and to commend to all those whose office and duty is the work of education.

Indeed never has there been so much discussion about education as nowadays; never have exponents of new pedagogical theories been so numerous, or so many methods and means devised, proposed and debated, not merely to facilitate education, but to create a new system infallibly efficacious, and capable of preparing the present generations for that earthly happiness which they so ardently desire.

The reason is that men, created by God to His image and likeness and destined for Him Who is infinite perfection realize today more than ever amid the most exuberant material progress, the insufficiency of earthly goods to produce true happiness either for the individual or for the nations. And hence they feel more keenly in themselves the impulse towards a perfection that is higher, which impulse is implanted in their rational nature by the Creator Himself. This perfection they seek to acquire by means of education. But many of them with, it would seem, too great insistence on the etymological meaning of the word, pretend to draw education out of human nature itself and evolve it by its own unaided powers. Such easily fall into error, because, instead of fixing their gaze on God, first principle and last end of the whole universe, they fall back upon themselves, becoming attached exclusively to passing things of earth; and thus their restlessness will never cease till they direct their attention and their efforts to God, the goal of all perfection, according to the profound saying of Saint Augustine: "Thou didst create us, O Lord, for Thyself, and our heart is restless till it rest in Thee." [3]

It is therefore as important to make no mistake in education, as it is to make no mistake in the pursuit of the last end, with which the whole work of education is intimately and necessarily connected. In fact, since education consists essentially in preparing man for what he must be and

[3] *Confess.*, I, 1: *Fecisti nos, Domine, ad Te. et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in Te.*

for what he must do here below, in order to attain the sublime end for which he was created, it is clear that there can be no true education which is not wholly directed to man's last end, and that in the present order of Providence, since God has revealed Himself to us in the Person of His Only Begotten Son, who alone is "the way, the truth and the life," there can be no ideally perfect education which is not Christian education.

From this we see the supreme importance of Christian education, not merely for each individual, but for families and for the whole of human society, whose perfection comes from the perfection of the elements that compose it. From these same principles, the excellence, we may well call it the unsurpassed excellence, of the work of Christian education becomes manifest and clear; for after all it aims at securing the Supreme Good, that is, God, for the souls of those who are being educated, and the maximum of well-being possible here below for human society. And this it does as efficaciously as man is capable of doing it, namely by co-operating with God in the perfecting of individuals and of society, in as much as education makes upon the soul the first, the most powerful and lasting impression for life, according to the well-known saying of the Wise Man, "A young man according to his way, even when he is old, he will not depart from it." [4] With good reason therefore did St. John Chrysostom say, "What greater work is there than training the mind and forming the habits of the young?" [5]

But nothing discloses to us the supernatural beauty and excellence of the work of Christian education better than the sublime expression of love of our Blessed Lord, identifying Himself with children, "Whosoever shall receive one such child as this in my name, receiveth me." [6]

Now in order that no mistake be made in this work of utmost importance, and in order to conduct it in the best manner possible with the help of God's grace, it is necessary

[4] *Prov.*, XXII, 6: *Adolescens iuxta viam suam etiam cum senuerit non recedet ab ea.*

[5] *Hom. 60*, in c. 18 Matth.: *Quid maius quam animis moderari, quam adolescentulorum fingere mores?*

[6] Marc., IX, 36: *Quisquis unum ex huiusmodi pueris receperit in nomine meo, me recipit*

to have a clear and definite idea of Christian education in its essential aspects, viz., who has the mission to educate, who are the subjects to be educated, what are the necessary accompanying circumstances, what is the end and object proper to Christian education according to God's established order in the economy of His Divine Providence.

Education is essentially a social and not a mere individual activity. Now there are three necessary societies, distinct from one another and yet harmoniously combined by God, into which man is born: two, namely the family and civil society, belong to the natural order; the third, the Church, to the supernatural order.

In the first place comes the family, instituted directly by God for its peculiar purpose, the generation and formation of offspring; for this reason it has priority of nature and therefore of rights over civil society. Nevertheless, the family is an imperfect society, since it has not in itself all the means for its own complete development; whereas civil society is a perfect society, having in itself all the means for its peculiar end, which is the temporal well-being of the community; and so, in this respect, that is, in view of the common good, it has pre-eminence over the family, which finds its own suitable temporal perfection precisely in civil society.

The third society, into which man is born when through Baptism he reaches the divine life of grace, is the Church; a society of the supernatural order and of universal extent; a perfect society, because it has in itself all the means required for its own end, which is the eternal salvation of mankind; hence it is supreme in its own domain.

Consequently, education which is concerned with man as a whole, individually and socially, in the order of nature and in the order of grace, necessarily belongs to all these three societies, in due proportion, corresponding, according to the disposition of Divine Providence, to the co-ordination of their respective ends.

And first of all education belongs pre-eminently to the Church, by reason of a double title in the supernatural order, conferred exclusively upon her by God Himself; absolutely superior therefore to any other title in the natural order.

The first title is founded upon the express mission and supreme authority to teach, given her by her divine Founder: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." [7] Upon this magisterial office Christ conferred infallibility, together with the command to teach His doctrine. Hence the Church "was set by her divine Author as the pillar and ground of truth, in order to teach the divine Faith to men, and keep whole and inviolate the deposit confided to her; to direct and fashion men, in all their actions individually and socially, to purity of morals and integrity of life, in accordance with revealed doctrine." [8]

The second title is the supernatural motherhood, in virtue of which the Church, spotless spouse of Christ, generates, nurtures and educates souls in the divine life of grace, with her Sacraments and her doctrine. With good reason then does St. Augustine maintain: "He has not God for father who refuses to have the Church as mother." [9]

Hence it is that in this proper object of her mission, that is, "in faith and morals, God Himself has made the Church sharer in the divine magisterium and, by a special privilege, granted her immunity from error; hence she is the mistress of men, supreme and absolutely sure, and she has inherent in herself an inviolable right to freedom in teaching." [10] By necessary consequence the Church is independ-

[7] MATTH., XXVIII, 18-20: *Data est mihi omnis potestas in caelo et in terra. Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti: docentes eos servare omnia quaecumque mandavi vobis. Et ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus usque ad consummationem saeculi.*

[8] Pius IX, Ep. *Quum non sine,* 14 Iul. 1864: *Columna et firmamentum veritatis a Divino suo Auctore fuit constituta, ut omnes homines divinam edoceat fidem, eiusque depositum sibi traditum integrum inviolatumque custodiat, ac homines eorumque consortia et actiones ad morum honestatem vitaeque integritatem, iuxta revelatae doctrinae normam, dirigat et fingat.*

[9] *De Symbolo ad catech.,* XIII: *Non habebit Deum patrem, qui Ecclesiam noluerit habere matrem.*

[10] Ep. enc. *Libertas,* 20 Iun. 1888: *in fide atque in institutione morum, divini magisterii Ecclesiam fecit Deus ipse participem,*

ent of any sort of earthly power as well in the origin as in the exercise of her mission as educator, not merely in regard to her proper end and object, but also in regard to the means necessary and suitable to attain that end. Hence with regard to every other kind of human learning and instruction, which is the common patrimony of individuals and society, the Church has an independent right to make use of it, and above all to decide what may help or harm Christian education. And this must be so, because the Church as a perfect society has an independent right to the means conducive to its end, and because every form of instruction, no less than every human action, has a necessary connection with man's last end, and therefore cannot be withdrawn from the dictates of the divine law, of which the Church is guardian, interpreter and infallible mistress.

This truth is clearly set forth by Pius X of saintly memory:

> Whatever a Christian does even in the order of things of earth, he may not overlook the supernatural; indeed he must, according to the teaching of Christian wisdom, direct all things towards the supreme good as to his last end; all his actions, besides, in so far as good or evil in the order of morality, that is, keeping or not with natural and divine law, fall under the judgment and jurisdiction of the Church.[11]

It is worthy of note how a layman, an excellent writer and at the same time a profound and conscientious thinker, has been able to understand well and express exactly this fundamental Catholic doctrine:

> The Church does not say that morality belongs purely, in the sense of exclusively, to her; but that it belongs wholly to her. She has never maintained that outside her fold and apart from her teaching, man cannot arrive at any moral truth; she has on the contrary

eamdemque divino eius beneficio falli nesciam: quare magistra mortalium est maxima ac tutissima, in eaque inest non violabile ius ad magisterii libertatem.

[11]Ep. enc. *Singulari quadam.* 24 Sept. 1912: *Quidquid homo christianus agat, etiam in ordine rerum terrenarum, non ei licet bona negligere quae sunt supra naturam, immo opportet ad summum bonum, tamquam ad ultimum finem, ex christianae sapientiae praescriptis omnia dirigat: omnes autem actiones eius, quatenus bonae aut malae sunt in genere morum, id est cum iure naturali et divino congruunt aut discrepant, indicio et iurisdictioni Ecclesiae subsunt.*

more than once condemned this opinion because it has appeared under more forms than one. She does however say, has said, and will ever say, that because of her institution by Jesus Christ, because of the Holy Ghost sent her in His name by the Father, she alone possesses what she has had immediately from God and can never lose, the whole of moral truth, *omnem veritatem,* in which all individual moral truth are included, as well those which man may learn by the help of reason, as those which form part of revelation or which may be deduced from it.[12]

Therefore with full right the Church promotes letters, science, art in so far as necessary or helpful to Christian education, in addition to her work for the salvation of souls; founding and maintaining schools and institutions adapted to every branch of learning and degree of culture.[13] Nor may even physical culture, as it is called, be considered outside the range of her maternal supervision, for the reason that it also is a means which may help or harm Christian education.

And this work of the Church in every branch of culture is of immense benefit to families and nations which without Christ are lost, as St. Hilary points out correctly: "What can be more fraught with danger for the world than the rejection of Christ?"[14] Nor does it interfere in the least with the regulations of the State, because the Church in her motherly prudence is not unwilling that her schools and institutions for the education of the laity be in keeping with the legitimate dispositions of civil authority; she is in every way ready to co-operate with this authority and to make provision for a mutual understanding, should difficulties arise.

Again it is the inalienable right as well as the indispensable duty of the Church, to watch over the entire education of her children, in all institutions, public or private, not merely in regard to the religious instruction there given, but in regard to every other branch of learning and every regulation in so far as religion and morality are concerned.[15]

[12]A. Manzoni, *Osservazioni sulla Morale Cattolica,* c. III.

[13]Codex Iuris Canonici, c. 1375.

[14]*Commentar. in Matth.,* cap. 18: *Quid mundo tam periculosum quam non recepisse Christum?*

[15]Cod. I. C., cc. 1381, 1382.

Nor should the exercise of this right be considered undue interference, but rather maternal care on the part of the Church in protecting her children from the grave danger of all kinds of doctrinal and moral evil. Moreover this watchfulness of the Church not merely can create no real inconvenience, but must on the contrary confer valuable assistance in the right ordering and well-being of families and of civil society; for it keeps far away from youth the moral poison which at that inexperienced and changeable age more easily penetrates the mind and more rapidly spreads its baneful effects. For it is true, as Leo XIII has wisely pointed out, that without proper religious and moral instruction "every form of intellectual culture will be injurious; for young people not accustomed to respect God, will be unable to bear the restraint of a virtuous life, and never having learned to deny themselves anything, they will easily be incited to disturb the public order." [16]

The extent of the Church's mission in the field of education is such as to embrace every nation, without exception, according to the command of Christ: "Teach ye all nations;"[17] and there is no power on earth that may lawfully oppose her or stand in her way. In the first place, it extends over all the Faithful, of whom she has anxious care as a tender mother. For these she has throughout the centuries created and conducted an immense number of schools and institutions in every branch of learning. As We said on a recent occasion:

> Right back in the far-off middle ages when there were so many (some have even said too many) monasteries, convents, churches, collegiate churches, cathedral chapters, etc., there was attached to each a home of study, of teaching, of Christian education. To these we must add all the universities, spread over every country and always by the initiative and under the protection of the Holy See and the Church. That grand spectacle, which today we see better, as it is nearer to us and more imposing because of the conditions of the age, was the spectacle of all times; and they who study and compare historical events remain astounded at what the Church has

[16] Ep. enc. *Nobilissima Gallorum Gens*, 8 Febr. 1884: *male sana omnis futura est animarum cultura: insueti ad verecundiam Dei adolescentes nullam ferre poterunt honeste vivendi disciplinam, suisque cupiditatibus nihil unquam negare ausi, facile ad miscendas civitates pertrahentur.*

[17] Matth., XXVIII, 19: ***docete omnes gentes.***

been able to do in this matter, and marvel at the manner in which she has succeeded in fulfilling her God-given mission to educate generations of men to a Christian life, producing everywhere a magnificent harvest of fruitful results. But if we wonder that the Church in all times has been able to gather about her and educate hundreds, thousands, millions of students, no less wonderful is it to bear in mind what she has done not only in the field of education, but in that also of true and genuine erudition. For, if so many treasures of culture, civilization and literature have escaped destruction, this is due to the action by which the Church, even in times long past and uncivilized, has shed so bright a light in the domain of letters, of philosophy, of art and in a special manner of architecture.[18]

All this the Church has been able to do because her mission to educate extends equally to those outside the Fold, seeing that all men are called to enter the kingdom of God and reach eternal salvation. Just as today when her missions scatter schools by the thousand in districts and countries not yet Christian, from the banks of the Ganges to the Yellow river and the great islands and archipelagos of the Pacific ocean, from the Dark Continent to the Land of Fire and to frozen Alaska, so in every age the Church by her missionaries has educated to Christian life and to civilization the various peoples which now constitute the Christian nations of the civilized world.

Hence it is evident that both by right and in fact the mission to educate belongs pre-eminently to the Church, and that no one free from prejudice can have a reasonable motive for opposing or impeding the Church in this her work, of which the world today enjoys the precious advantages.

This is the more true because the rights of the family and of the State, even the rights of individuals regarding a just liberty in the pursuit of science, of methods of science and all sorts of profane culture, not only are not opposed to this pre-eminence of the Church, but are in complete harmony with it. The fundamental reason for this harmony is that the supernatural order, to which the Church owes her rights, not only does not in the least destroy the natural order, to which pertain the other rights mentioned, but elevates the natural and perfects it, each affording mutual aid to the other, and completing it in a manner proportioned to its respective nature and dignity. The reason is because

[18]Discourse to the students of Mondragone College, May 14, 1929.

both come from God, who cannot contradict Himself: "The works of God are perfect and all His ways are judgments." [19]

This becomes clearer when we consider more closely and in detail the mission of education proper to the family and to the State.

In the first place the Church's mission of education is in wonderful agreement with that of the family, for both proceed from God, and in a remarkably similar manner. God directly communicates to the family, in the natural order, fecundity, which is the principle of life, and hence also the principle of education to life, together with authority, the principle of order.

The Angelic Doctor with his wonted clearness of thought and precision of style, says: "The father according to the flesh has in a particular way a share in that principle which in a manner universal is found in God. . . . The father is the principle of generation, of education and discipline and of everything that bears upon the perfecting of human life."[20]

The family therefore holds directly from the Creator the mission and hence the right to educate the offspring, a right inalienable because inseparably joined to the strict obligation, a right anterior to any right whatever of civil society and of the State, and therefore inviolable on the part of any power on earth.

That this right is inviolable St. Thomas proves as follows:

> The child is naturally something of the father . . . so by natural right the child, before reaching the use of reason, is under the father's care. Hence it would be contrary to natural justice if the child, before the use of reason, were removed from the care of its parents, or if any disposition were made concerning him against the will of the parents.[21]

[19] *Deut.*, XXXII, 4: *Dei perfecta sunt opera, et omnes viae eius iudicia.*

[20] S. Th., 2-2, Q. CII, a. 1: *Carnalis pater particulariter participat rationem principii quae universaliter invenitur in Deo. . . . Pater est principium et generationis et educatonis et disciplinae, et omnium quae ad perfectionem humanae vitae pertinent.*

[21] S. Th., 2-2, Q. X, a. 12: *Filius enim naturaliter est aliquid patris . . .; ita de iure naturali est quod filius, antequam habeat usum rationis, sit sub cura patris. Unde contra iustitiam naturalem esset, si puer, antequam habeat usum rationis, a cura parentum subtrahatur, vel de eo aliquid ordinetur invitis parentibus.*

And as this duty on the part of the parents continues up to the time when the child is in a position to provide for itself, this same inviolable parental right of education also endures. "Nature intends not merely the generation of the offspring, but also its development and advance to the perfection of man considered as man, that is, to the state of virtue" [22] says the same St. Thomas.

The wisdom of the Church in this matter is expressed with precision and clearness in the Codex of Canon Law, can. 1113: "Parents are under a grave obligation to see to the religious and moral education of their children, as well as to their physical and civic training, as far as they can, and moreover to provide for their temporal well-being." [23]

On this point the common sense of mankind is in such complete accord, that they would be in open contradiction with it who dared maintain that the children belong to the State before they belong to the family, and that the State has an absolute right over their education. Untenable is the reason they adduce, namely that man is born a citizen and hence belongs primarily to the State, not bearing in mind that before being a citizen man must exist; and existence does not come from the State, but from the parents, as Leo XIII wisely declared: "The children are something of the father, and as it were an extension of the person of the father; and, to be perfectly accurate, they enter into and become part of civil society, not directly by themselves, but through the family in which they were born." [24] "And therefore," says the same Leo XIII, "the father's power is of such a nature that it cannot be destroyed or absorbed by the State; for it has the same origin as human life

[22]Suppl. S. Th. 3. p. Q. 41, a. 1: *Non enim intendit natura solum generationem prolis, sed etiam traductionem et promotionem usque ad perfectum statum hominis in quantum homo est, qui est virtutis status.*

[23]Cod. I. C., c. 1113: *Parentes gravissima obligatione tenentur prolis educationem tum religiosam et moralem, tum physicam et civilem pro viribus curandi, et etiam temporali eorum bono providendi.*

[24]Ep. enc. *Rerum novarum*. 15 Maii 1891: *Filii sunt aliquid patris, et velut paternae amplificatio quaedam personae proprieque loqui si volumus, non ipsi per se, sed per communitatem domesticam in qua generati sunt, civilem ineunt ac participant societatem*

itself." [25] It does not however follow from this that the parents' right to educate their children is absolute and despotic; for it is necessarily subordinated to the last end and to natural and divine law, as Leo XIII declares in another memorable encyclical, where He thus sums up the rights and duties of parents: "By nature parents have a right to the training of their children, but with this added duty that the education and instruction of the child be in accord with the end for which by God's blessing it was begotten. Therefore it is the duty of parents to make every effort to prevent any invasion of their rights in this matter, and to make absolutely sure that the education of their children remain under their own control in keeping with their Christian duty, and above all to refuse to send them to those schools in which there is danger of imbibing the deadly poison of impiety." [26]

It must be borne in mind also that the obligation of the family to bring up children, includes not only religious and moral education, but physical and civic education as well,[27] principally in so far as it touches upon religion and morality.

This incontestable right of the family has at various times been recognized by nations anxious to respect the natural law in their civil enactments. Thus, to give one recent example, the Supreme Court of the United States of America, in a decision on an important controversy, declared that it is not in the competence of the State to fix any uniform standard of education by forcing children to receive instruction exclusively in public schools, and it bases its decision on the natural law: the child is not the mere creature of the State; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right coupled with the high duty,

[25] Ep. enc. *Rerum novarum*, 15 Maii 1891: *Patria potestas est eiusmodi, ut nec extingui, neque absorberi a republica possit, quia idem et commune habet cum ipsa hominum vita principium.*

[26] Ep. enc. *Sapientiae christianae*, 10 Ian. 1890: *Natura parentes habent ius suum instituendi, quos procrearint, hoc adiuncto officio, ut cum fine, cuius gratia sobolem Dei beneficio susceperunt, ipsa educatio conveniat et doctrina puerilis. Igitur parentibus est necessarium eniti et contendere, ut omnem in hoc genere propulsent iniuriam, omninoque pervincant ut sua in potestate sit educere liberos, uti par est, more christiano, maximeque prohibere scholis iis, a quibus periculum est ne malum venenum imbibant impietatis*

[27] Cod. I. C., c. 1113.

to educate him and prepare him for the fulfilment of his obligations.[28]

History bears witness how, particularly in modern times, the State has violated and does violate rights conferred by God on the family. At the same time it shows magnificently how the Church has ever protected and defended these rights, a fact proved by the special confidence which parents have in Catholic schools. As We pointed out recently in Our letter to the Cardinal Secretary of State:

> The family has instinctively understood this to be so, and from the earliest days of Christianity down to our own times, fathers and mothers, even those of little or no faith, have been sending or bringing their children in millions to places of education under the direction of the Church.[29]

It is paternal instinct, given by God, that thus turns with confidence to the Church, certain of finding in her the protection of family rights, thereby illustrating that harmony with which God has ordered all things. The Church is indeed conscious of her divine mission to all mankind, and of the obligation which all men have to practise the one true religion; and therefore she never tires of defending her right, and of reminding parents of their duty, to have all Catholic-born children baptized and brought up as Christians. On the other hand so jealous is she of the family's inviolable natural right to educate the children, that she never consents, save under peculiar circumstances and with special cautions, to baptize the children of infidels, or provide for their education against the will of the parents, till such time as the children can choose for themselves and freely embrace the Faith.[30]

We have therefore two facts of supreme importance, as We said in Our discourse cited above: The Church placing

[28]"The fundamental theory of liberty upon which all governments in this Union repose excludes any general power of the State to standardize its children by forcing them to accept instruction from public teachers only. The child is not the mere creature of the State; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right coupled with the high duty, to recognize, and prepare him for additional duties." U. S. Supreme Court Decision in the Oregon School Case, June 1, 1925.

[29]Letter to the Cardinal Secretary of State, May 30, 1929.

[30]Cod. I. C., c. 750, § 2. S. Th., 2, 2. O. X, a. 12.

at the disposal of families her office of mistress and educator, and the families eager to profit by the offer, and entrusting their children to the Church in hundreds and thousands. These two facts recall and proclaim a striking truth of the greatest significance in the moral and social order. They declare that the mission of education regards before all, above all, primarily the Church and the family, and this by natural and divine law, and that therefore it cannot be slighted, cannot be evaded, cannot be supplanted.[31]

From such priority of rights on the part of the Church and of the family in the field of education, most important advantages, as we have seen, accrue to the whole of society. Moreover in accordance with the divinely established order of things, no damage can follow from it to the true and just rights of the State in regard to the education of its citizens.

These rights have been conferred upon civil society by the Author of nature Himself, not by title of fatherhood, as in the case of the Church and of the family, but in virtue of the authority which it possesses to promote the common temporal welfare, which is precisely the purpose of its existence. Consequently education cannot pertain to civil society in the same way in which it pertains to the Church and to the family, but in a different way corresponding to its own particular end and object.

Now this end and object, the common welfare in the temporal order, consists in that peace and security in which families and individual citizens have the free exercise of their rights, and at the same time enjoy the greatest spiritual and temporal prosperity possible in this life, by the mutual union and co-ordination of the work of all. The function therefore of the civil authority residing in the State is twofold, to protect and to foster, but by no means to absorb the family and the individual, or to substitute itself for them.

Accordingly in the matter of education, it is the right, or to speak more correctly, it is the duty of the State to protect in its legislation, the prior rights, already described, of the family as regards the Christian education of its offspring, and consequently also to respect the supernatural

[31] Discourse to the students of Mondragone College, May 14, 1929.

rights of the Church in this same realm of Christian education.

It also belongs to the State to protect the rights of the child itself when the parents are found wanting either physically or morally in this respect, whether by default, incapacity or misconduct, since, as has been shown, their right to educate is not an absolute and despotic one, but dependent on the natural and divine law, and therefore subject alike to the authority and jurisdiction of the Church, and to the vigilance and administrative care of the State in view of the common good. Besides, the family is not a perfect society, that is, it has not in itself all the means necessary for its full development. In such cases, exceptional no doubt, the State does not put itself in the place of the family, but merely supplies deficiencies, and provides suitable means, always in conformity with the natural rights of the child and the supernatural rights of the Church.

In general then it is the right and duty of the State to protect, according to the rules of right reason and faith, the moral and religious education of youth, by removing public impediments that stand in the way.

In the first place it pertains to the State, in view of the common good, to promote in various ways the education and instruction of youth. It should begin by encouraging and assisting, of its own accord, the initiative and activity of the Church and the family, whose successes in this field have been clearly demonstrated by history and experience. It should moreover supplement their work whenever this falls short of what is necessary, even by means of its own schools and institutions. For the State more than any other society is provided with the means put at its disposal for the needs of all, and it is only right that it use these means to the advantage of those who have contributed them.[32]

Over and above this, the State can exact, and take measures to secure that all its citizens have the necessary knowledge of their civic and political duties, and a certain degree of physical, intellectual and moral culture, which, considering the conditions of our times, is really necessary for the common good.

[32]Discourse to the students of Mondragone College, May 14. 1929.

However it is clear that in all these ways of promoting education and instruction, both public and private, the State should respect the inherent rights of the Church and of the family concerning Christian education, and moreover have regard for distributive justice. Accordingly, unjust and unlawful is any monopoly, educational or scholastic, which, physically or morally, forces families to make use of government schools, contrary to the dictates of their Christian conscience, or contrary even to their legitimate preferences.

This does not prevent the State from making due provision for the right administration of public affairs and for the protection of its peace, within or without the realm. These are things which directly concern the public good and call for special aptitudes and special preparation. The State may therefore reserve to itself the establishment and direction of schools intended to prepare for certain civic duties and especially for military service, provided it be careful not to injure the rights of the Church or of the family in what pertains to them. It is well to repeat this warning here; for in these days there is spreading a spirit of nationalism which is false and exaggerated, as well as dangerous to true peace and prosperity. Under its influence various excesses are committed in giving a military turn to the so-called physical training of boys (sometimes even of girls, contrary to the very instincts of human nature); or again in usurping unreasonably on Sunday, the time which should be devoted to religious duties and to family life at home. It is not our intention however to condemn what is good in the spirit of discipline and legitimate bravery promoted by these methods; We condemn only what is excessive, as for example violence, which must not be confounded with courage nor with the noble sentiment of military valour in defense of country and public order; or again exaltation of athleticism which even in classic pagan times marked the decline and downfall of genuine physical training.

In general also it belongs to civil society and the State to provide what may be called civic education, not only for its youth, but for all ages and classes. This consists in the practice of presenting publicly to groups of individuals information having an intellectual, imaginative and emotional appeal, calculated to draw their wills to what is upright

and honest, and to urge its practice by a sort of moral compulsion, positively by disseminating such knowledge, and negatively by suppressing what is opposed to it.[33] This civic education, so wide and varied in itself as to include almost every activity of the State intended for the public good, ought also to be regulated by the norms of rectitude, and therefore cannot conflict with the doctrines of the Church, which is the divinely appointed teacher of these norms.

All that we have said so far regarding the activity of the State in educational matters, rests on the solid and immovable foundation of the Catholic doctrine of *The Christian Constitution of States* set forth in such masterly fashion by Our Predecessor Leo XIII, notably in the Encyclicals *Immortale Dei* and *Sapientiae Christianae*. He writes as follows:

> God has divided the government of the human race between two authorities, ecclesiastical and civil, establishing one over things divine, the other over things human. Both are supreme, each in its own domain; each has its own fixed boundaries which limit its activities. These boundaries are determined by the peculiar nature and the proximate end of each, and describe as it were a sphere within which, with exclusive right, each may develop its influence. As however the same subjects are under the two authorities, it may happen that the same matter, though from a different point of view, may come under the competence and jurisdiction of each of them. It follows that divine Providence, whence both authorities have their origin, must have traced with due order the proper line of action for each. The powers that are, are ordained of God.[34]

Now the education of youth is precisely one of those

[33] P. L. Taparelli, *Saggio teor. di Diritto Naturale*, n. 922; a work never sufficiently praised and recommended to university students (Cfr. Our Discourse of Dec. 18, 1927).

[34] Ep. enc. *Immortale Dei*, 1 Nov. 1885: *Deus humani generis procurationem inter duas potestates partitus est, scilicet ecclesiasticam et civilem, alteram quidem divinis, alteram humanis rebus praepositam. Utraque est in suo genere maxima: habet utraque certos, quibus contineatur, terminos, eosque sua cuiusque natura causaque proxime definitos; unde aliquis velut orbis circumscribitur, in quo sua cuiusque actio iure proprio versetur. Sed quia utriusque imperium est in eosdem, cum usuvenire possit, ut res una atque eadem quamquam aliter atque aliter, sed tamen eadem res, ad utriusque ius iudiciumque pertineat, debet providentissimus Deus, a quo sunt ambae constitutae, utriusque itinera recte atque ordine com posuisse. Quae autem sunt, a Deo ordinatae sunt* (Rom., XIII, 1)

matters that belong both to the Church and to the State, "though in different ways," as explained above.

Therefore, continues Leo XIII, between the two powers there must reign a well-ordered harmony. Not without reason may this mutual agreement be compared to the union of body and soul in man. Its nature and extent can only be determined by considering, as we have said, the nature of each of the two powers, and in particular the excellence and nobility of the respective ends. To one is committed directly and specifically the charge of what is helpful in worldly matters; while the other is to concern itself with the things that pertain to heaven and eternity. Everything therefore in human affairs that is in any way sacred, or has reference to the salvation of souls and the worship of God, whether by its nature or by its end, is subject to the jurisdiction and discipline of the Church. Whatever else is comprised in the civil and political order, rightly comes under the authority of the State; for Christ commanded us to give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.[35]

Whoever refuses to admit these principles, and hence to apply them to education, must necessarily deny that Christ has founded His Church for the eternal salvation of mankind, and maintain instead that civil society and the State are not subject to God and to His law, natural and divine. Such a doctrine is manifestly impious, contrary to right reason, and, especially in this matter of education, extremely harmful to the proper training of youth, and disastrous as well for civil society as for the well-being of all mankind. On the other hand from the application of these principles, there inevitably result immense advantages for the right formation of citizens. This is abundantly proved by the history of every age. Tertullian in his *Apologeticus* could

[35]Ep. enc. *Immortale Dei,* 1 Nov. 1885: *Itaque inter utramque potestatem quaedam intercedat necesse est ordinata colligatio: quae quidem coniunctioni non immerito comparatur, per quam anima et corpus in homine copulantur. Qualis autem et quanta ea sit, aliter iudicari non potest, nisi respiciendo, uti diximus, ad utriusque naturam, habendaque ratione excellentiae et nobilitatis causarum; cum alteri proxime maximeque propositum sit rerum mortalium curare commoda, alteri caelestia ac sempiterna bona comparare. Quidquid igitur est in rebus humanis quoquo modo sacrum, quidquid ad salutem animorum cultumve Dei pertinet, sive tale illud sit natura sua, sive rursus tale intelligatur propter caussam ad quam refertur, id est omne in potestate arbitrioque Ecclesiae: cetera vero, quae civile et politicum genus complectitur, rectum est civili auctoritati esse subiecta, cum Iesus Christus iusserit, quae Caesaris sint, reddi* ***Caesari, quae Dei, Deo.***

throw down a challenge to the enemies of the Church in the early days of Christianity, just as St. Augustine did in his; and we today can repeat with him:

> Let those who declare the teaching of Christ to be opposed to the welfare of the State, furnish us with an army of soldiers such as Christ says soldiers ought to be; let them give us subjects, husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, servants, kings, judges, taxpayers and taxgatherers who live up to the teachings of Christ; and then let them dare assert that Christian doctrine is harmful to the State. Rather let them not hesitate one moment to acclaim that doctrine, rightly observed, the greatest safeguard of the State.[36]

While treating of education, it is not out of place to show here how an ecclesiastical writer, who flourished in more recent times, during the Renaissance, the holy and learned Cardinal Silvio Antoniano, to whom the cause of Christian education is greatly indebted, has set forth most clearly this well established point of Catholic doctrine. He had been a disciple of that wonderful educator of youth, St. Philip Neri; he was teacher and Latin secretary to St. Charles Borromeo, and it was at the latter's suggestion and under his inspiration that he wrote his splendid treatise on *The Christian Education of Youth.* In it he argues as follows:

> The more closely the temporal power of a nation aligns itself with the spiritual, and the more it fosters and promotes the latter, by so much the more it contributes to the conservation of the commonwealth. For it is the aim of the ecclesiastical authority by the use of spiritual means, to form good Christians in accordance with its own particular end and object; and in doing this it helps at the same time to form good citizens, and prepares them to meet their obligations as members of a civil society. This follows of necessity because in the City of God, the Holy Roman Catholic Church, a good citizen and an upright man are absolutely one and the same thing. How grave therefore is the error of those who separate things so closely united, and who think that they can produce good citizens by ways and methods other than those which make for the formation of good Christians. For, let human pru-

[36] *Ep. 138: Proinde qui doctrinam Christi adversam dicunt esse reipublicae, dent exercitum talem, quales doctrinas Christi esse milites iussit; dent tales provinciales, tales maritos, tales coniuges, tales parentes, tales filios, tales dominos, tales servos, tales reges, tales iudices, tales denique debitorum ipsius fisci redditores et exactores, quales esse praecipit doctrina christiana, et audeant eam dicere adversam esse reipublicae, ima vero non dubitent eam confiteri magnam, si obtemperetur, salutem esse reiublicae*

dence say what it likes and reason as it pleases, it is impossible to produce true temporal peace and tranquillity by things repugnant or opposed to the peace and happiness of eternity.[37]

What is true of the State, is true also of science, scientific methods and scientific research; they have nothing to fear from the full and perfect mandate which the Church holds in the field of education. Our Catholic institutions, whatever their grade in the educational and scientific world, have no need of apology. The esteem they enjoy, the praise they receive, the learned works which they promote and produce in such abundance, and above all, the men, fully and splendidly equipped, whom they provide for the magistracy, for the professions, for the teaching career, in fact for every walk of life, more than sufficiently testify in their favour.[38]

These facts moreover present a most striking confirmation of the Catholic doctrine defined by the Vatican Council:

Not only is it impossible for faith and reason to be at variance with each other, they are on the contrary of mutual help. For while right reason establishes the foundations of Faith, and, by the help of its light, develops a knowledge of the things of God, Faith on the other hand frees and preserves reason from error and enriches it with varied knowledge. The Church therefore, far from hindering the pusuit of the arts and sciences, fosters and promotes them in many ways. For she is neither ignorant nor unappreciative of the many advantages which flow from them to mankind. On the contrary she admits that just as they come from God, Lord of all knowledge, so too if rightly used, with the help of His grace they lead to God. Nor does she prevent the sciences, each in its own sphere, from making use of principles and methods of their own. Only while acknowledging the freedom due to them, she takes every precaution to prevent them from falling into error by opposition to divine doctrine, or from overstepping their proper limits, and thus invading and disturbing the domain of Faith.[39]

[37] *Dell'educaz. crist.*, lib. I, c. 43.

[38] Letter to the Cardinal Secretary of State, May 30, 1929.

[39] Conc. Vat., Sess. 3, cap. 4. *Neque solum fides et ratio inter se dissidere nunquam possunt, sed opem quoque sibi mutuam ferunt, cum recta ratio fidei fundamenta demonstret eiusque lumine illustrata rerum divinarum scientiam excolat, fides vero rationem ab erroribus liberet ac tueatur eamque multiplici cognitione instruat. Quapropter tantum abest, ut Ecclesia humanarum artium et disciplinarium culturae obsistat, ut hanc multis modis invet atque pro-*

This norm of a just freedom in things scientific, serves also as an inviolable norm of a just freedom in things didactic, or for rightly understood liberty in teaching; it should be observed therefore in whatever instruction is imparted to others. Its obligation is all the more binding in justice when there is question of instructing youth. For in this work the teacher, whether public or private, has no absolute right of his own, but only such as has been communicated to him by others. Besides every Christian child or youth has a strict right to instruction in harmony with the teaching of the Church, the pillar and ground of truth. And whoever disturbs the pupil's Faith in any way, does him grave wrong, inasmuch as he abuses the trust which children place in their teachers, and takes unfair advantage of their inexperience and of their natural craving for unrestrained liberty, at once illusory and false.

In fact it must never be forgotten that the subject of Christian education is man whole and entire, soul united to body in unity of nature, with all his faculties natural and supernatural, such as right reason and revelation show him to be; man, therefore, fallen from his original estate, but redeemed by Christ and restored to the supernatural condition of adopted son of God, though without the preternatural privileges of bodily immortality or perfect control of appetite. There remain therefore, in human nature the effects of original sin, the chief of which are weakness of will and disorderly inclinations.

"Folly is bound up in the heart of a child and the rod of correction shall drive it away."[40] Disorderly inclinations then must be corrected, good tendencies encouraged and regulated from tender childhood, and above all the mind must be enlightened and the will strengthened by super-

moveat. Non enim commoda ab iis ad hominum vitam dimanantia aut ignorat aut despicit; fatetur immo, eas, quemadmodum a Deo scientiarum Domino profectae sunt, ita, si rite pertractentur, ad Deum iuvante eius gratia perducere. Nec sane ipsa vetat, ne huiusmodi disciplinae in suo quaeque ambitu propriis utantur principiis et propria methodo; sed iustam hanc libertatem agnoscens, id sedulo cavet, ne divinae doctrinae repugnando errores in se suscipiant, aut fines proprios transgressae ea, quae sunt fidei, occupent et perturbent.

[40] *Prov.*, XXII, 15: *Stultitia colligata est in corde pueri: et virga disciplinae fugabit eam.*

natural truth and by the means of grace, without which it is impossible to control evil impulses, impossible to attain to the full and complete perfection of education intended by the Church, which Christ has endowed so richly with divine doctrine and with the Sacraments, the efficacious means of grace.

Hence every form of pedagogic naturalism which in any way excludes or weakens supernatural Christian formation in the teaching of youth, is false. Every method of education founded, wholly or in part, on the denial or forgetfulness of original sin and of grace, and relying on the sole powers of human nature, is unsound. Such, generally speaking, are those modern systems bearing various names which appeal to a pretended self-government and unrestrained freedom on the part of the child, and which diminish or even suppress the teacher's authority and action, attributing to the child an exclusive primacy of initiative, and an activity independent of any higher law, natural or divine, in the work of his education.

If any of these terms are used, less properly, to denote the necessity of a gradually more active co-operation on the part of the pupil in his own education; if the intention is to banish from education despotism and violence, which, by the way, just punishment is not, this would be correct, but in no way new. It would mean only what has been taught and reduced to practice by the Church in traditional Christian education, in imitation of the method employed by God Himself towards His creatures, of whom He demands active co-operation according to the nature of each; for His Wisdom "reacheth from end to end mightily and ordereth all things sweetly."[41]

But alas! it is clear from the obvious meaning of the words and from experience, that what is intended by not a few, is the withdrawal of education from every sort of dependence of the divine law. So today we see, strange sight indeed, educators and philosophers who spend their lives in searching for a universal moral code of education, as if there existed no decalogue, no gospel law, no law even of nature stamped by God on the heart of man, promulgated by right

[41] *Sap.*, VIII, 1: *attingit a fine usque ad finem fortiter, et disponit omnia suaviter*

reason, and codified in positive revelation by God Himself in the ten commandments. These innovators are wont to refer contemptuously to Christian education as "heteronomous," "passive," "obsolete," because founded upon the authority of God and His holy law.

Such men are miserably deluded in their claim to emancipate, as they say, the child, while in reality they are making him the slave of his own blind pride and of his disorderly affections, which, as a logical consequence of this false system, come to be justified as legitimate demands of a so-called autonomous nature.

But what is worse is the claim, not only vain but false, irreverent and dangerous, to submit to research, experiment and conclusions of a purely natural and profane order, those matters of education which belong to the supernatural order; as for example questions of priestly or religious vocation, and in general the secret workings of grace which indeed elevate the natural powers, but are infinitely superior to them, and may nowise be subjected to physical laws, for "the Spirit breatheth where He will."[42]

Another very grave danger is that naturalism which nowadays invades the field of education in that most delicate matter of purity of morals. Far too common is the error of those who with dangerous assurance and under an ugly term propagate a so-called sex-education, falsely imagining they can forearm youths against the dangers of sensuality by means purely natural, such as a foolhardy initiation and precautionary instruction for all indiscriminately, even in public; and, worse still, by exposing them at an early age to the occasions, in order to accustom them, so it is argued, and as it were to harden them against such dangers.

Such persons grievously err in refusing to recognize the inborn weakness of human nature, and the law of which the Apostle speaks, fighting against the law of the mind;[43] and also in ignoring the experience of facts, from which it is clear that, particularly in young people, evil practices are the effect not so much of ignorance of intellect as of weakness of a will exposed to dangerous occasions, and unsupported by the means of grace.

[42]Io., III, 8: *Spiritus ubi vult spirat.* [43]*Rom.*, VII, 23.

In this extremely delicate matter, if, all things considered, some private instruction is found necessary and opportune, from those who hold from God the commission to teach and who have the grace of state, every precaution must be taken. Such precautions are well known in traditional Christian education, and are adequately described by Antoniano cited above, when he says:

> Such is our misery and inclination to sin, that often in the very things considered to be remedies against sin, we find occasions for and inducements to sin itself. Hence it is of the highest importance that a good father, while discussing with his son a matter so delicate, should be well on his guard and not descend to details, nor refer to the various ways in which this infernal hydra destroys with its poison so large a portion of the world; otherwise it may happen that instead of extinguishing this fire, he unwittingly stirs or kindles it in the simple and tender heart of the child. Speaking generally, during the period of childhood it suffices to employ those remedies which produce the double effect of opening the door to the virtue of purity and closing the door upon vice.[44]

False also and harmful to Christian education is the so-called method of "co-education." This too, by many of its supporters, is founded upon naturalism and the denial of original sin; but by all, upon a deplorable confusion of ideas that mistakes a leveling promiscuity and equality, for the legitimate association of the sexes. The Creator has ordained and disposed perfect union of the sexes only in matrimony, and, with varying degrees of contact, in the family and in society. Besides there is not in nature itself, which fashions the two quite different in organism, in temperament, in abilities, anything to suggest that there can be or ought to be promiscuity, and much less equality, in the training of the two sexes. These, in keeping with the wonderful designs of the Creator, are destined to complement each other in the family and in society, precisely because of their differences, which therefore ought to be maintained and encouraged during their years of formation, with the necessary distinction and corresponding separation, according to age and circumstances. These principles, with due regard to time and place, must, in accordance with Christian prudence, be applied to all schools, particularly in the most

[44] Silvio Antonio, *Dell'educazione cristiana dei figliuoli, lib.* II, c. 88.

delicate and decisive period of formation, that, namely, of adolescence; and in gymnastic exercises and deportment, special care must be had of Christian modesty in young women and girls, which is so gravely impaired by any kind of exhibition in public.

Recalling the terrible words of the Divine Master: "Woe to the world because of scandals!"[45] We most earnestly appeal to your solicitude and your watchfulness, Venerable Brethren, against these pernicious errors, which, to the immense harm of youth, are spreading far and wide among Christian peoples.

In order to obtain perfect education, it is of the utmost importance to see that all those conditions which surround the child during the period of his formation, in other words that the combination of circumstances which we call environment, correspond exactly to the end proposed.

The first natural and necessary element in this environment, as regards education, is the family, and this precisely because so ordained by the Creator Himself. Accordingly that education, as a rule, will be more effective and lasting which is received in a well-ordered and well-disciplined Christian family; and more efficacious in proportion to the clear and constant good example set, first by the parents, and then by the other members of the household.

It is not our intention to treat formally the question of domestic education, nor even to touch upon its principal points. The subject is too vast. Besides there are not lacking special treatises on this topic by authors, both ancient and modern, well known for their solid Catholic doctrine. One which seems deserving of special mention is the golden treatise already referred to, of Antoniano, *On the Christian Education of Youth,* which St. Charles Borromeo ordered to be read in public to parents assembled in their churches.

Nevertheless, Venerable Brethren and beloved children, We wish to call your attention in a special manner to the present-day lamentable decline in family education. The offices and professions of a transitory and earthly life, which are certainly of far less importance, are prepared for by long and careful study; whereas for the fundamental duty and

[45] MATTH., XVIII, 7: *Vae mundo a scandalis!*

obligation of educating their children, many parents have little or no preparation, immersed as they are in temporal cares. The declining influence of domestic environment is further weakened by another tendency, prevalent almost everywhere today, which, under one pretext or another, for economic reasons, or for reasons of industry, trade or politics, causes children to be more and more frequently sent away from home even in their tenderest years. And there is a country where the children are actually being torn from the bosom of the family, to be formed (or, to speak more accurately, to be deformed and depraved) in godless schools and associations, to irreligion and hatred, according to the theories of advanced socialism; and thus is renewed in a real and more terrible manner the slaughter of the Innocents.

For the love of Our Saviour Jesus Christ, therefore, we implore pastors of souls, by every means in their power, by instructions and catechisms, by word of mouth and written articles widely distributed, to warn Christian parents of their grave obligations. And this should be done not in a merely theoretical and general way, but with practical and specific application to the various responsibilties of parents touching the religious, moral and civil training of their children, and with indication of the methods best adapted to make their training effective, supposing always the influence of their own exemplary lives. The Apostle of the Gentiles did not hesitate to descend to such details of practical instruction in his epistles, especially in the Epistle to the Ephesians, where among other things he gives this advice: "And you, fathers, provoke not your children to anger."[46] This fault is the result not so much of excessive severity, as of impatience and of ignorance of means best calculated to effect a desired correction; it is also due to the all too common relaxation of parental discipline which fails to check the growth of evil passions in the hearts of the younger generation. Parents therefore, and all who take their place in the work of education, should be careful to make right use of the authority given them by God, whose vicars in a true sense they are. This authority is not given for their own advantage, but for the proper up-bringing of

[46] *Eph.*, VI, 4: *Patres, nolite ad iracundiam provocare filios vestros.*

their children in a holy and filial "fear of God, the beginning of wisdom," on which foundation alone all respect for authority can rest securely; and without which, order, tranquillity and prosperity, whether in the family or in society, will be impossible.

To meet the weakness of man's fallen nature, God in His Goodness has provided the abundant helps of His grace and the countless means with which He has endowed the Church, the great family of Christ. The Church therefore is the educational environment most intimately and harmoniously associated with the Christian family.

This educational environment of the Church embraces the Sacraments, divinely efficacious means of grace, the sacred ritual, so wonderfully instructive, and the material fabric of her churches, whose liturgy and art have an immense educational value; but it also includes the great number and variety of schools, associations and institutions of all kinds, established for the training of youth in Christian piety, together with literature and the sciences, not omitting recreation and physical culture. And in this inexhaustible fecundity of educational works, how marvellous, how incomparable is the Church's maternal providence! So admirable too is the harmony which she maintains with the Christian family, that the Church and the family may be said to constitute together one and the same temple of Christian education.

Since however the younger generations must be trained in the arts and sciences for the advantage and prosperity of civil society, and since the family of itself is unequal to this task, it was necessary to create that social institution, the school. But let it be borne in mind that this institution owes its existence to the initiative of the family and of the Church, long before it was undertaken by the State. Hence considered in its historical origin, the school is by its very nature an institution subsidiary and complementary to the family and to the Church. It follows logically and necessarily that it must not be in opposition to, but in positive accord with those other two elements, and form with them a perfect moral union, constituting one sanctuary of education, as it were, with the family and the Church. Otherwise it is doomed to fail of its purpose, and to become instead an agent of destruction.

This principle we find recognized by a layman, famous for his pedagogical writings, though these because of their liberalism cannot be unreservedly praised. "The school," he writes, "if not a temple, is a den." And again: "When literary, social, domestic and religious education do not go hand in hand, man is unhappy and helpless."[47]

From this it follows that the so-called "neutral" or "lay" school, from which religion is excluded, is contrary to the fundamental principles of education. Such a school moreover cannot exist in practice; it is bound to become irreligious. There is no need to repeat what Our Predecessors have declared on this point, especially Pius IX and Leo XIII, at times when laicism was beginning in a special manner to infest the public school. We renew and confirm their declarations,[48] as well as the Sacred Canons in which the frequenting of non-Catholic schools, whether neutral or mixed, those namely which are open to Catholics and non-Catholics alike, is forbidden for Catholic children, and can be at most tolerated, on the approval of the Ordinary alone, under determined circumstances of place and time, and with special precautions.[49] Neither can Catholics admit that other type of mixed school, (least of all the so-called "école unique," obligatory on all), in which the students are provided with separate religious instruction, but receive other lessons in common with non-Catholic pupils from non-Catholic teachers.

For the mere fact that a school gives some religious instruction (often extremely stinted), does not bring it into accord with the rights of the Church and of the Christian family, or make it a fit place for Catholic students. To be this, it is necessary that all the teaching and the whole organization of the school, and its teachers, syllabus and text-books in very branch, be regulated by the Christian spirit, under the direction and maternal supervision of the Church; so that Religion may be in very truth the founda-

[47]Nic. Tommaseo, *Pensieri sull'educazione*, Parte I, 3, 6.

[48]Pius IX, Ep. *Quum non sine*, 14 Iul. 1864.—Syllabus, Prop. 48. —Leo XIII, alloc. *Summi Pontificatus*, 20 Aug. 1880, Ep. enc. *Nobilissima*, 8 Febr. 1884, Ep. enc. *Quod multum*, 22 Aug. 1886, Ep. *Officio sanctissimo*, 22 Dec. 1887, Ep. enc. *Caritatis*, 19 Mart. 1894, etc. (cfr. Cod. I. C. cum. Fontium Annot., c. 1374).

[49]Cod. I. C., c. 1374.

tion and crown of the youth's entire training; and this in every grade of school, not only the elementary, but the intermediate and the higher institutions of learning as well. To use the words of Leo XIII:

> It is necessary not only that religious instruction be given to the young at certain fixed times, but also that every other subject taught, be permeated with Christian piety. If this is wanting, if this sacred atmosphere does not pervade and warm the hearts of masters and scholars alike, little good can be expected from any kind of learning, and considerable harm will often be the consequence.[50]

And let no one say that in a nation where there are different religious beliefs, it is impossible to provide for public instruction otherwise than by neutral or mixed schools. In such a case it becomes the duty of the State, indeed it is the easier and more reasonable method of procedure, to leave free scope to the initiative of the Church and the family, while giving them such assistance as justice demands. That this can be done to the full satisfaction of families, and to the advantage of education and of public peace and tranquillity, is clear from the actual experience of some countries comprising different religious denominations. There the school legislation respects the rights of the family, and Catholics are free to follow their own system of teaching in schools that are entirely Catholic. Nor is distributive justice lost sight of, as is evidenced by the financial aid granted by the State to the several schools demanded by the families.

In other countries of mixed creeds, things are otherwise, and a heavy burden weighs upon Catholics, who under the guidance of their Bishops and with the indefatigable co-operation of the clergy, secular and regular, support Catholic schools for their children entirely at their own expense; to this they feel obliged in conscience, and with a generosity and constancy worthy of all praise, they are firmly determined to make adequate provision for what they openly

[50]Ep. enc. *Militantis Ecclesiae,* 1 Aug. 1897: *Necesse est non modo certis horis doceri iuvenes religionem, sed reliquam institutionem omnem christianae pietatis sensus redolere. Id si desit, si sacer hic halitus non doctorum animos ac discentum pervadat foveatque, exiguae capientur ex qualibet doctrina utilitates; damna saepe consequentur haud exigua.*

profess as their motto: "Catholic education in Catholic schools for all the Catholic youth." If such education is not aided from public funds, as distributive justice requires, certainly it may not be opposed by any civil authority ready to recognize the rights of the family, and the irreducible claims of legitimate liberty.

Where this fundamental liberty is thwarted or interfered with, Catholics will never feel, whatever may have been the sacrifices already made, that they have done enough, for the support and defence of their schools and for the securing of laws that will do them justice.

For whatever Catholics do in promoting and defending the Catholic school for their children, is a genuinely religious work and therefore an important task of "Catholic Action." For this reason the associations which in various countries are so zealously engaged in this work of prime necessity, are especially dear to Our paternal heart and are deserving of every commendation.

Let it be loudly proclaimed and well understood and recognized by all, that Catholics, no matter what their nationality, in agitating for Catholic schools for their children, are not mixing in party politics, but are engaged in a religious enterprise demanded by conscience. They do not intend to separate their children either from the body of the nation or its spirit, but to educate them in a perfect manner, most conducive to the prosperity of the nation. Indeed a good Catholic, precisely because of his Catholic principles, makes the better citizen, attached to his country, and loyally submissive to constituted civil authority in every legitimate form of government.

In such a school, in harmony with the Church and the Christian family, the various branches of secular learning will not enter into conflict with religious instruction to the manifest detriment of education. And if, when occasion arises, it be deemed necessary to have the students read authors propounding false doctrine, for the purpose of refuting it, this will be done after due preparation and with such an antidote of sound doctrine, that it will not only do no harm, but will be an aid to the Christian formation of youth.

In such a school moreover, the study of the vernacular

and of classical literature will do no damage to moral virtue. There the Christian teacher will imitate the bee, which takes the choicest part of the flower and leaves the rest, as St. Basil teaches in his discourse to youths on the study of the classics.[51] Nor will this necessary caution, suggested also by the pagan Quintilian,[52] in any way hinder the Christian teacher from gathering and turning to profit, whatever there is of real worth in the systems and methods of our modern times, mindful of the Apostle's advice: "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good."[53] Hence in accepting the new, he will not hastily abandon the old, which the experience of centuries has found expedient and profitable. This is particularly true in the teaching of Latin, which in our days is falling more and more into disuse, because of the unreasonable rejection of methods so successfully used by that sane humanism, whose highest development was reached in the schools of the Church. These noble traditions of the past require that the youth committed to Catholic schools be fully instructed in the letters and sciences in accordance with the exigencies of the times. They also demand that the doctrine imparted be deep and solid, especially in sound philosophy, avoiding the muddled superficiality of those "who perhaps would have found the necessary, had they not gone in search of the superfluous."[54] In this connection Christian teachers should keep in mind what Leo XIII says in a pithy sentence:

> Greater stress must be laid on the employment of apt and solid methods of teaching, and, what is still more important, on bringing into full conformity with the Catholic faith, what is taught in literature, in the sciences, and above all in philosophy, on which depends in great part the right orientation of the other branches of knowledge.[55]

Perfect schools are the result not so much of good methods as of good teachers, teachers who are thoroughly pre-

[51] *P. G.*, t. 31, 570.

[52] *Inst. Or.*, I, 8.

[53] *I Thess.*, V, 21: *omnia probate; quod bonum est tenete.*

[54] Seneca, *Epist.* 45: *invenissent forsitan necessaria nisi et superflua quaesiissent.*

[55] Leo XIII, Ep. enc., *Inscrutabli* 21 Apr. 1878: . . . *alacrius adnitendum est, ut non solum apta ac solida institutionis methodus, sed maxime institutio ipsa catholicae fidei omnino conformis in litteris et disciplinis vigeat, praesertim autem in philosophia, ex qua recta aliarum scientiarum ratio magna ex parte dependet.*

pared and well-grounded in the matter they have to teach; who possess the intellectual and moral qualifications required by their important office; who cherish a pure and holy love for the youths confided to them, because they love Jesus Christ and His Church, of which these are the children of predilection; and who have therefore sincerely at heart the true good of family and country. Indeed it fills Our soul with consolation and gratitude towards the divine Goodness to see, side by side with religious men and women engaged in teaching, such a large number of excellent lay teachers, who, for their greater spiritual advancement, are often grouped in special sodalities and associations, which are worthy of praise and encouragement as most excellent and powerful auxiliaries of "Catholic Action." All these labour unselfishly with zeal and perseverance in what St. Gregory Nazianzen calls "the art of arts and the science of sciences,"[56] the direction and formation of youth. Of them also it may be said in the words of the divine Master: "The harvest indeed is great, but the labourers few."[57] Let us then pray the Lord of the harvest to send more such workers into the field of Christian education; and let their formation be one of the principal concerns of the pastors of souls and of the superiors of Religious Orders.

It is no less necessary to direct and watch the education of the adolescent, "soft as wax to be moulded into vice,"[58] in whatever other environment he may happen to be, removing occasions of evil and providing occasions for good in his recreations and social intercourse; for "evil communications corrupt good manners."[59]

More than ever nowadays an extended and careful vigilance is necessary, inasmuch as the dangers of moral and religious shipwreck are greater for inexperienced youth. Especially is this true of impious and immoral books, often diabolically circulated at low prices; of the cinema, which multiplies every kind of exhibition; and now also of the radio, which facilitates every kind of communication. These most powerful means of publicity, which can be of great util-

[56]Oratio II, *P. G.*, t. 35, 426: *ars artium et scientia scientiarvum.*
[57]Matth., IX, 37: *Messis quidem multa, operarii autem pauci.*
[58]Horat., *Art. poet.*, v. 163: *cereus in vitium flecti.*
[59]*I Cor.*, XV, 33c: *corrumpunt mores bonos colloquia mala.*

ity for instruction and education when directed by sound principles, are only too often used as an incentive to evil passions and greed for gain. St. Augustine deplored the passion for the shows of the circus which possessed even some Christians of his time, and he dramatically narrates the infatuation for them, fortunately only temporary, of his disciple and friend Alipius.[60] How often today must parents and educators bewail the corruption of youth brought about by the modern theatre and the vile book!

Worthy of all praise and encouragement therefore are those educational associations which have for their object to point out to parents and educators, by means of suitable books and periodicals, the dangers to morals and religion that are often cunningly disguised in books and theatrical representations. In their spirit of zeal for the souls of the young, they endeavour at the same time to circulate good literature and to promote plays that are really instructive, going so far as to put up at the cost of great sacrifices, theatres and cinemas, in which virtue will have nothing to suffer and much to gain.

This necessary vigilance does not demand that young people be removed from the society in which they must live and save their souls; but that today more than ever they should be forewarned and forearmed as Christians against the seductions and the errors of the world, which, as Holy Writ admonishes us, is all "concupiscence of the flesh, concupiscence of the eyes and pride of life."[61] Let them be what Tertullian wrote of the first Christians, and what Christians of all times ought to be, "sharers in the possession of the world, not of its error."[62]

This saying of Tertullian brings us to the topic which we propose to treat in the last place, and which is of the greatest importance, that is, the true nature of Christian education, as deduced from its proper end. Its consideration reveals with noonday clearness the pre-eminent educational mission of the Church.

The proper and immediate end of Christian education

[60] *Conf.*, VI, 8.

[61] *I Io.*, II, 16: *concupiscentia carnis, concupiscentia oculorum et superbia vitae.*

[62] *De Idololatria*, 14: *compossessores mundi, non erroris.*

is to co-operate with divine grace in forming the true and perfect Christian, that is, to form Christ Himself in those regenerated by Baptism, according to the emphatic expression of the Apostle: "My little children, of whom I am in labour again, until Christ be formed in you."[63] For the true Christian must live a supernatural life in Christ: "Christ who is your life,"[64] and display it in all his actions: "That the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh."[65]

For precisely this reason, Christian education takes in the whole aggregate of human life, physical and spiritual, intellectual and moral, individual, domestic and social, not with a view of reducing it in any way, but in order to elevate, regulate and perfect it, in accordance with the example and teaching of Christ.

Hence the true Christian, product of Christian education, is the supernatural man who thinks, judges and acts constantly and consistently in accordance with right reason illumined by the supernatural light of the example and teaching of Christ; in other words, to use the current term, the true and finished man of character. For, it is not every kind of consistency and firmness of conduct based on subjective principles that makes true character, but only constancy in following the eternal principles of justice, as is admitted even by the pagan poet when he praises as one and the same "the man who is just and firm of purpose."[66] And on the other hand, there cannot be full justice except in giving to God what is due to God, as the true Christian does.

The scope and aim of Christian education as here described, appears to the worldly as an abstraction, or rather as something that cannot be attained without the suppression or dwarfing of the natural faculties, and without a renunciation of the activities of the present life, and hence inimical to social life and temporal prosperity, and con-

[63] *Gal.*, IV, 19: *Filioli mei, quos iterum parturio, donec formetur Christus in vobis.*

[64] *Col.*, III, 4: *Christus, vita vestra.*

[65] *II Cor.*, IV, 11: *ut et vita Iesu manifestetur in carne nostra mortali.*

[66] Horat., *Od.* 1, III, od. 3, v. 1: *Iustum et tenacem propositi virum*

trary to all progress in letters, arts and sciences, and all the other elements of civilization. To a like objection raised by the ignorance and the prejudice of even cultured pagans of a former day, and repeated with greater frequency and insistence in modern times, Tertullian has replied as follows:

> We are not strangers to life. We are fully aware of the gratitude we owe to God, our Lord and Creator. We reject none of the fruits of His handiwork; we only abstain from their immoderate or unlawful use. We are living in the world with you; we do not shun your forum, your markets, your baths, your shops, your factories, your stables, your places of business and traffic. We take ship with you and we serve in your armies; we are farmers and merchants with you; we interchange skilled labour and display our works in public for your service. How we can seem unprofitable to you with whom we live and of whom we are, I know not.[67]

The true Christian does not renounce the activities of this life, he does not stunt his natural faculties; but he develops and perfects them, by co-ordinating them with the supernatural. He thus ennobles what is merely natural in life and secures for it new strength in the material and temporal order, no less than in the spiritual and eternal.

This fact is proved by the whole history of Christianity and its institutions, which is nothing else but the history of true civilization and progress up to the present day. It stands out conspicuously in the lives of the numerous Saints, whom the Church, and she alone, produces, in whom is perfectly realized the purpose of Christian education, and who have in every way ennobled and benefited human society. Indeed, the Saints have ever been, are, and ever will be the greatest benefactors of society, and perfect models for every class and profession, for every state and condition of life, from the simple and uncultured peasant to the master of sciences and letters, from the humble artisan to the commander of armies, from the father of a family

[67] *Apol.*, 42: *Non sumus exules vitae. Meminimus gratiam nos debere Deo Domino Creatori; nullum fructum operum eius repudiamus; plane temperamus, ne ultra modum aut perperam utamur. Itaque non sine foro, non sine macello, non sine balneis, tabernis, officinis, stabulis, nundinis vestris, caeterisque commerciis cohabitamus in hoc saeculo. Navigamus et nos vobiscum et militamus et rusticamur, et mercamur, proinde miscemus artes, operas nostras publicamus usui vestro. Quomodo infructuosi videamur negotiis vestris, cum quibus et de quibus vivimus, non scio.*

to the ruler of peoples and nations, from simple maidens and matrons of the domestic hearth to queens and empresses. What shall we say of the immense work which has been accomplished even for the temporal well-being of men by missionaries of the Gospel, who have brought and still bring to barbarous tribes the benefits of civilization together with the light of the Faith? What of the founders of so many social and charitable institutions, of the vast numbers of saintly educators, men and women, who have perpetuated and multiplied their life work, by leaving after them prolific institutions of Christian education, in aid of families and for the inestimable advantage of nations?

Such are the fruits of Christian education. Their price and value is derived from the supernatural virtue and life in Christ which Christian education forms and develops in man. Of this life and virtue Christ our Lord and Master is the source and dispenser. By His example He is at the same time the universal model accessible to all, especially to the young in the period of His hidden life, a life of labour and obedience, adorned with all virtues, personal, domestic and social, before God and men.

Conclusion

Now all this array of priceless educational treasures which We have barely touched upon, is so truly a property of the Church as to form her very substance, since she is the mystical body of Christ, the immaculate spouse of Christ, and consequently a most admirable mother and an incomparable and perfect teacher. This thought inspired St. Augustine, the great genius of whose blessed death we are about to celebrate the fifteenth centenary, with accents of tenderest love for so glorious a mother:

> O Catholic Church, true Mother of Christians! Not only dost thou preach to us, as is meet, how purely and chastely we are to worship God Himself, Whom to possess is life most blessed; thou dost moreover so cherish neighbourly love and charity, that all the infirmities to which sinful souls are subject, find their most potent remedy in thee. Childlike thou art in moulding the child, strong with the young man, gentle with the aged, dealing with each according to his needs of mind and of body. Thou dost subject child to parent in a sort of free servitude, and settest parent over child in a

jurisdiction of love. Thou bindest brethren to brethren by the bond of religion, stronger and closer than the bond of blood. . . . Thou unitest citizen to citizen, nation to nation, yea, all men, in a union not of companionship only, but of brotherhood, reminding them of their common origin. Thou teachest kings to care for their people, and biddest people to be subject to their kings. Thou teachest assiduously to whom honour is due, to whom love, to whom reverence, to whom fear, to whom comfort, to whom rebuke, to whom punishment; showing us that whilst not all things nor the same things are due to all, charity is due to all and offense to none.[68]

Let us then, Venerable Brethren, raise our hands and our hearts in supplication to heaven, "to the Shepherd and Bishop of *our* Souls,"[69] to the divine King "who gives laws to rulers," that in His almighty power He may cause these splendid fruits of Christian education to be gathered in ever greater abundance "in the whole world," for the lasting benefit of individuals and of nations.

As a pledge of these heavenly favours, with paternal affection We impart to you, Venerable Brethren, to your clergy and your people, the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, the thirty-first day of December, in the year 1929, the eighth of Our Pontificate.

PIUS PP. XI.

[68] *De moribus Ecclesiae catholicae*, lib. I, c. 30: *Merito Ecclesia catholica Mater christianorum verissima, non solum ipsum Deum, cuius adeptio vita est beatissima, purissime atque castissime colendum praedicas; sed etiam proximi dilectionem atque charitatem ita complecteris, ut variorum morborum, quibus pro peccatis suis animae aegrotant, omnis apud te medicina praepolleat. Tu pueriliter, pueros, fortiter iuvenes, quiete senes prout cuiusque non corporis tantum sed et animi aetas est, exerces ac doces. Tu parentibus filios libera quadam servitute subiungis, parentes filiis pia dominatione praeponis. Tu fratribus fratres religionis vinculo firmiore atque arctiore quam sanguinis nectis . . . Tu cives civibus, gentes gentibus, et prorsus homines primorum parentum recordatione, non societate tantum, sed quadam etiam fraternitate coniungis. Doces Reges prospicere populis; mones populos se subdere Regibus. Quibus honor debeatur, quibus affectus, quibus reverentia, quibus timor, quibus consolatio, quibus admonitio, quibus cohortatio, quibus disciplina, quibus obiurgatio, quibus supplicium, sedulo doces; ostendens quemadmodum et non omnibus omnia, et omnibus charitas, et nulli debeatur iniuria.*

[69] Cfr. *I Petr.*, II, 25: *ad Pastorem et Episcopum animarum vestrarum.*

Outline

[The marginal notes of the official English text of the Encyclical are here assembled in the form of a brief.]

Introduction:
- A. Reasons for treating of Christian Education.
- B. Nature, importance and excellence of Christian Education.
- C. Division of subject matter.

To Whom Does Education Belong:
- A. In general.
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     - a. Pre-eminently.
     - b. Supernatural Motherhood.
     - c. Extent of the rights of the Church.
     - d. Harmony between the rights of the Church and those of the Family and the State.
  2. To the Family:
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     - c. Recognized by civil law.
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  3. To the State:
     - a. For the public good.
     - b. Twofold function.
     - c. Certain forms of education reserved to itself.
     - d. Relation between Church and State.
     - e. Necessity and advantages of mutual agreement.

Subject of Education:
- A. The whole man, fallen but redeemed.
- B. Naturalism in education false and damaging.
- C. Sex-instruction.
- D. Co-education.

Environment of Education:
- A. The Christian Family.
- B. The Church and her Educational Works.
- C. The School:
  1. Neutral, lay.
  2. Mixed, "Unique."
  3. Catholic.
     - a. Catholic Action through the School.
     - b. Good Teachers.
- D. The world and its dangers.

End and Object of Christian Education:
- A. To form the true Christian.
- B. Who is also the noblest and most useful of citizens.
- C. Christ, Master and Model of Education.

Conclusion.

SAINT AUGUSTINE

Encyclical Letter

(Ad salutem)

of

His Holiness, Pope Pius XI

(Vatican Press Translation)

Issued April 20, 1930

(Third Printing)

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on

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Encyclical Letter

TO OUR VENERABLE BROTHERS
THE PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS,
BISHOPS AND OTHER ORDINARIES
HAVING PEACE AND COMMUNION WITH THE
APOSTOLIC SEE

CONCERNING

SAINT AUGUSTINE, BISHOP OF HIPPO AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

On the Occasion of the
Fifteenth Hundredth Anniversary of His Death

POPE PIUS XI

Venerable Brothers, Greeting and
Apostolic Blessings

TO THE Church providentially established by Him for the salvation of mankind, Jesus Christ has ever given and forever will give most efficacious assistance. Apart from its obvious fitness and even its necessity, apart also from the promise of the Divine Founder as we read in the Gospel, this is abundantly evidenced by the history of the Church: that Church which the plague of error has never defiled, nor any falling away of her children, however numerous, has overthrown, nor even persecution by wicked men, though carried to the utmost of atrocity, has hindered from regaining the vigor of youth to flourish anew and always.

Our Lord does not, indeed, use one and the same means, nor follow one and the same course, in securing the stability and furthering the growth of His Church which belongs to every age. He rather has raised up in each age illustrious men, whose

genius and deeds, fully in keeping with the needs of time and circumstance, enabled them to check and vanquish the powers of darkness, to the great joy of the Christian people.

AUGUSTINE PROVIDENTIAL FIGURE

Such a providential choice is far more evident in the case of Augustine of Tagaste than in most others. In the eyes of his contemporaries, he was as a light set upon a candlestick, a destroyer of heresy in every form, a leader in the way of eternal salvation. Not only has he continued through the centuries to teach and comfort the faithful of Christ, but further, in this age of ours, it is largely due to him that the truth of faith ceases not to shine forth among them nor the fire of divine charity to burn. Nay, more, it is a matter of common knowledge that for many who differ from us or who seemingly have no faith at all, the writings of Augustine have a power to charm, so grand are they and so delightful.

Hence it is that the fifteen hundredth anniversary of his death, which occurs this year, will be fittingly observed by Christians throughout the world who are eager to honor his memory and to give expression to their admiration and reverent esteem for this great Bishop and Doctor. We therefore, with a deep sense of Our Apostolic Office, and with desire exceeding great, are resolved to have Our share in this world-wide tribute. We exhort you all, then, Venerable Brothers, as also the clergy and people under your charge, to unite with Us in

a special thanksgiving to our heavenly Father for having enriched His Church with benefits so many and so great through Augustine, who out of the abundance of gifts divinely bestowed on him drew such large profit for himself and with it endowed the whole Catholic body. Today, then, it behooves the faithful indeed to glory in a man who long ago was joined as it were by a miracle to the Mystic Body of Christ—a man than whom, by the verdict of history, past ages produced no greater or grander in all the world; and, what is more, it behooves them to imbue and nourish themselves with his doctrine, to follow the example he gave of holiest living.

At no time has the Church of God, the Roman Pontiffs in particular, wearied of praising Augustine. Even during the life-time of the holy Bishop, Innocent I, greeted him as a dearly beloved friend and spoke in highest terms of the letters which he had received from Augustine and four other Bishops who loved him—"letters full of faith and strong with all the vigor of the Catholic religion." Shortly after Augustine's death, Celestine I defended him against his enemies in these splendid words: "We have ever had in communion with us Augustine of holy memory for the sake of his life and merits; never has the slightest breath of evil suspicion tarnished his name. We have always kept him in memory as a man of such great learning that my predecessors ranked him with the foremost masters. Unanimously they held him in high esteem, for all loved him and paid him honor."

PRAISED BY MANY PONTIFFS

Gelasius I declared Augustine and Jerome "the lights of ecclesiastical teachers." Hormisdas, writing to Possessor, a bishop who had sought counsel of him, replied in these significant words: "The doctrine on free will and divine grace which the Roman, that is the Catholic Church follows and proclaims, though it can be learned in various books of blessed Augustine, especially in those addressed to Hilary and Prosper, is nevertheless expressly stated in the records of the Church." Of the same tenor is the eulogy pronounced by John II, who cites as against the heretics the works of Augustine, "whose doctrine," he declares, "the Roman Church, in accordance with the decrees of my predecessors, follows and maintains." And who does not know how thoroughly the Roman Pontiffs in the ages which followed closely on Augustine's death, as, for instance, Leo the Great and Gregory the Great, were versed in his doctrine? St. Gregory, indeed, so modest regarding himself, so eager to honor Augustine, wrote to Innocent, Prefect of Africa: "Would you feast on delicious food, read the works of your countryman, the blessed Augustine, nor ask us to give you what, as compared with his white flour, is but our bran."

Furthermore, it is well known that Hadrian I was accustomed frequently to cite passages from Augustine, whom he called the "excellent doctor," likewise that Clement VIII, in clearing up difficult controversies, and Pius VI (in his Apostolic Constitution "Auctorem Fidei"), in laying bare the eva-

sions of the condemned Synod of Pistoia, used as their support Augustine's authority.

It redounds moreover to the credit of the Bishop of Hippo that more than once the Fathers lawfully assembled in Councils adopted his very words in defining Catholic truth; suffice it under this head to mention the Second Council of Orange and the Council of Trent.

And, going back to Our own early years, We gladly recall and, as it were with intense pleasure, ponder the words with which Our predecessor of immortal memory, Leo XIII, after mentioning those who had lived before Augustine, praised the latter for the help he had given to Christian philosophy: "Augustine bore off the palm from all others; with the power of his genius, and the fulness of his knowledge in every field both sacred and profane, he battled relentlessly against all the errors of his day—perfect in faith and in learning no less. What problem in philosophy did he not touch upon—or rather what problem did he not most thoroughly investigate, either expounding the deepest mysteries of the Faith to believers and defending them against the senseless attacks of adversaries, or again, through his refutation of the Academicians and Manicheans, restoring and securing the foundations of human knowledge, or tracing the character, origin and causes of the evils with which mankind is burdened?"

CORRECT UNDERSTANDING NEEDFUL

But, before coming to closer range with our sub-

ject, We would remind all that the eloquent tributes paid to Augustine by the writers of old must be correctly understood—and not, as has been thought by some who lacked the Catholic sense, in such a way as to set the authority of Augustine the exponent above the authority of the Church Herself, the Teacher.

How wonderful is God in His Saints! God, whose mercy toward him, Augustine, with words springing from the very depth of his thankful and loving soul, so eloquently sets forth and extols in his book of Confessions. For under God's most providential inspiration, the pious Monica, ere yet he had reached his boyhood, so inflamed him with the love of Christ that later he could say: "For this Name according to Thy mercy, this Name of my Saviour Thy Son, had my tender heart, even with my mothers' milk, devoutly drunk in and deeply treasured; and whatsoever was without that Name, though never so learned and polished and true, took not entire hold of me."

As a youth, however, when he had left his mother and become the pupil of pagan teachers, the Most High God permitted that he should fall away from his early piety, enslave himself to sensuous pleasure and be caught in the toils of the Manicheans, whose sect he followed for nearly nine years. This God permitted in order that he who was to be the Doctor of Grace should learn by experience, and teach all who came after him, how weak and frail is even the noblest mind unless it be strengthened in the way of virtue by the safeguards of Christian edu-

cation and by constant prayer. This is especially true of youth, the age in which the soul is more easily lured and led astray by error and troubled by the first stirring of sensuous impulse. So God permitted that Augustine should realize in his own case how wretched is the man who seek fulfillment and satisfaction in created things, as he himself later on frankly acknowledged before the Lord: "For Thou wert ever with me, mercifully severe and besprinkling with most bitter alloy all my unlawful pleasures, that I might seek pleasure without alloy, but where to find such I could not discover save in Thee, O God."

And why, then, should Augustine be left to himself by his heavenly Father, Whom Monica with tears and prayers besought—Monica, that model of mothers, who, with calmness and gentleness of soul, through incessant appeal to the mercy of God, succeed at length in bringing back their sons to right ways of living? It was not possible that the son of so many tears should perish. As he himself says: "And as to what I set down in those same books about my conversion, when God led me back to that faith which I was laying waste with my mad and abominable talkativeness—do you not recall that this was told in order to show that because of my mother's tears, daily and faithfully shed, God granted I should not perish?"

HIS GRADUAL CONVERSION

Augustine therefore was gradually drawn away from the Manichean heresy, and guided as it were

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by a divine inspiration and impulse to Milan and to Ambrose its Bishop. Little by little the Lord, "with hand most gentle and most merciful laying hold of his heart and setting it right," brought it to pass that he should be led by the most wise discourses of Ambrose to believe in the Catholic Church and in the truth of the Bible. Even then, Monica's son, though not yet wholly free from anxiety and from the allurements of vice, held firmly that by divine Providence the way of salvation was marked out in no other than in Christ our Lord and in the holy Scriptures for whose truth only the authority of the Catholic Church could vouch.

But how difficult and how laborious was the conversion of a man who for long had wandered from the path! He was still enslaved by his desires and the tumult of his soul, powerless to restrain them. So far was he from getting out of the Platonic teachings about God and creatures the strength he needed, that, on the contrary, he would have made his wretched plight more wretched still—through pride—had he not learned at length from the Apostle Paul's Epistles that whoso would lead a Christian life must be grounded in humility and supported by the grace of God.

And so—We recall a thing which no one can narrate without shedding tears—bewailing the evil deeds of his past and drawn by the example of so many Christians who had suffered the loss of all things else to gain the "one thing necessary," Augustine finally surrendered to the divine mercy which had sweetly pursued him when, as he was at

prayer, on a sudden a voice smote him—"take up and read"—whereupon he opened the book of the Epistles which he had at hand, and, carried onward by the efficacious impulse of heavenly grace, he glanced upon the words: "not in rioting and in drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and in envy; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences."

From that moment, as is well known, until his spirit fled, Augustine was wholly given to God.

It very soon appeared what a "vessel of election" the Lord had fashioned for Himself in Augustine and to what glorious achievements he was destined. Ordained to the priesthood and later raised to the Episcopal dignity as Bishop of Hippo, he began to spread the light of his copious learning and the benefit of his apostolate not only over Christian Africa but also upon the Church Universal. He therefore devoted himself to meditation on the Sacred Scriptures, to long and frequent prayers (whose spirit and words still echo in his books), to diligent study of the works of the Fathers and Doctors who had preceded him and whom he revered in all humility—in order that he might gain day by day a clearer insight and a fuller knowledge of the truths revealed by God. He came indeed later than those holy men who, as brightest stars, had shed lustre on the Catholic name—e.g., Clement of Rome, Irenaeus, Hilary, Athanasius, Cyprian, Ambrose, Basil, Gregory of Nazianzen, and John Chrysostom. Jerome was his contemporary; and

yet Augustine even now arouses the admiration of mankind by reason of the keenness and power of his thought and because of the wonderful wisdom which his writings, composed and published during the long space of nearly fifty years, still exhale.

HIS TEACHING APPLIED TO TODAY

Difficult it is to follow his thought through those numerous treatises, so rich in learning, which deal with all the questions of theology, of Biblical exegesis and of moral science, and therefore can hardly be grasped and understood by any commentor. And yet, may we not draw out from this great mass of doctrine certain teachings which seem peculiarly adapted to the needs of our age and useful to Christian society?

To begin with, Augustine took the utmost pains that all men might learn and fully realize for what end—for what supreme purpose—they are destined, and the way by which alone they can attain true happiness. Who, We ask, however thoughtless and frivolous, could hear without emotion a man so long a devotee of pleasure and so highly skilled in the art of making the best of this life, avow to God: "Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it rest in Thee." These words, which sum up the whole of wisdom, most fittingly express, on one hand, the love of God for us and the singular dignity of man, and, on the other, the wretched plight of those who live far from their Creator.

Certainly in our age as never before, when the

marvels of creation come day by day more clearly to view and when man with his intelligence brings under control the prodigious forces and powers of nature to use them for his advantage and luxury and enjoyment; today, We say, when devices and contrivances produced either by inventive genius or by the artisan's toil are constantly multiplied and carried with incredible speed to every part of the world; our mind too often gives itself entirely to created things and forgets the Creator: it runs after fleeting goods to the neglect of the eternal, and it perverts to harmful uses both private and public, as well as to its own ruin, those gifts which it received from a bounteous God that it might extend the Kingdom of Christ and further its own salvation. Lest we allow ourselves to become absorbed by this kind of worldliness, which is wholly bent on material things and sensuous pleasures, it behooves us to search out and ponder the principles of Christian wisdom which the Bishop of Hippo so aptly proposed and explained.

"God, then, the most wise Creator and most just Disposer of all natures, Who placed the human race upon earth as its chief ornament, bestowed on men some good things adapted to this life, to wit, temporal peace such as can be had in this mortal life in the enjoyment of health and safety and human fellowship, and all things needful for the preservation or recovery of this peace, such as the objects which are fitly and suitably accommodated to our senses —light, night, air to breathe, water to drink and everything the body requires to sustain, shelter, heal

or beautify it. God bestowed all under this most equitable condition, that all who made right use of such good things adapted to the peace of mortals should receive greater and richer blessings, namely, the peace of immortality and, as befitting it, glory and honor in an endless life for the enjoyment of God and of one another in God; but that all who used the present blessings badly, should forfeit them and should not receive the others."

REQUIRED ADHERENCE TO CHURCH

Having discoursed on the supreme end appointed for man, Augustine hastens to add that whoever would attain it will strive in vain unless they submit to the Catholic Church and humbly obey it, since it alone is divinely established to bring into the souls of men that light and strength without which they inevitably go astray and run headlong in the way that leads to perdition.

God in His great goodness never lets those who seek after Him go blindly on and reeling, as it were, "to seek God, if happily they may feel after Him or find Him," but dispelling the darkness of their ignorance, He makes Himself known to them through revelation and calls the erring ones to repentance—"And God indeed, having winked at the times of this ignorance, now declareth unto men that all should everywhere do penance." Having inspired the Sacred Writers, He entrusted the Bible to the Church founded by His only begotten Son as the custodian and authentic interpreter of His word. And the divine origin of that Church, He

from the very beginning showed and proved on the ground of the miracles wrought by Christ, its Founder—"The sick healed, the lepers cleansed, the lame made to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear. The men of that time beheld water changed into wine, five thousand fed upon five loaves, the seas crossed over on foot, the dead brought back to life. Thus, some of His works were of visible benefit to the body, others, less visibly, of profit to the soul, while all bore witness before men to His power and majesty; thereby the divine authority stirred up and drew to itself the erring minds of mortal men."

Granted that since then miracles are somewhat less frequent, we may ask why? Simply because through the wonderful spread of the faith and the betterment of human society due to the Christian moral teaching, God's witness (to the divine origin of the Church) became ever more impressive. "Think you," says Augustine in his endeavor to win back to the Church his friend Honoratus, "think you that but slight advantage accrued to human welfare from the fact that not a few of the most learned contend, while ignorant multitudes also of men and women among so many different peoples believe and declare, that no thing of earth or fire or any such object of sense is to be worshipped instead of God, Whom the intellect alone can approach? That abstinence is carried even to the barest living on bread and water, fasting not merely for a single day but for many days in succession, chastity even to the refusal of marriage and offspring, patience even to the making light of crosses and flames, lib-

erality to the point of distributing among the poor one's family fortune; in fine, contempt for the whole world even to the longing for death? Few there be who do such things, fewer still who do them wisely and well; but the people approve them; the people praise them; the people look on them with favor; the people love them; the people acknowledge that such things are beyond their reach—; and this acknowledgment in itself implies some advance toward God, some gleaming of virtue. This has been brought about by divine providence through the predictions of the prophets, the Incarnation and teaching of Christ, the journeyings of the Apostles, the sufferings of the martyrs under insult and torment, unto the shedding of blood and death, the praiseworthy lives of the Saints, and, along with all this as opportunity offered miracles befitting such noble deeds, such marvels of virtue.

VIGOR OF TEACHINGS PERSISTS

"Considering, then, the manifest intervention of God, so great in results and advantages, shall we hesitate to betake ourselves to the bosom of that Church which, as the human race recognizes, holds, in the Apostolic See through the succession of Bishops, the summit of authority, while the heretics go yelping about in vain, condemned as they are, partly by the verdict of the people, partly by the solemn decrees of Councils, partly, too, by the overwhelming evidence of miracles?"

These declarations of Augustine, which in the

course of time have lost nothing of their vigor and weight, are rather borne out, as is plain to everyone, by the facts of the long space of fifteen centuries. For during these ages the Church of God, though tried by so many calamities and upheavals, torn by heresy and dissension, grieved by the disloyalty and unworthiness of so many of her children, nevertheless, with unwavering trust on her Founder's promises, while human institutions all about her crumbled, not only remained safe and sound, but also in each succeeding age abounded more and more in wondrous examples of holiness and devout living, kindled and quickened the flame of charity in numberless Christian souls, gathered new peoples into her fold through the labors of her missionaries and martyrs, among whom the glory of virginity and the dignity of the priesthood and of the Episcopal office are in flower and vigor; and finally imbued all races of men with her spirit of charity and justice, so thoroughly that even those who neglect or assail her cannot but borrow her manner of speech and her method of action.

Rightly, therefore, in his controversy with the Donatists (who boldly sought to narrow down and confine the true Church of Christ to a certain corner of Africa), after holding against them, in rebuttal of their claim, the universality, or, as it is called, the "Catholicity" of the Church, embracing all men that they may be helped and defended by divine Grace, rightly did Augustine bring his argument to its close with the solemn asseveration—"With judgment sure the world entire decides"—

words which not very long ago so impressed a man most highly distinguished for his learning and nobleness of soul (John Henry Newman) that he forthwith determined to enter the one fold of Christ the Shepherd.

AVOWED AUTHORITY OF POPES

Augustine, for that matter, openly avowed that the unity of the Church Catholic and, as well, the immunity from all error of its teaching proceeded not only from its invisible Head, Christ Jesus, Who from heaven "rules His body" and speaks through His teaching Church, but also from its visible head on earth, the Roman Pontiff, who by lawful right of succession occupies the Chair of Peter. For the series of Peter's successors is "the very rock against which the proud gates of hell shall not prevail; and beginning with Peter the Apostle (whom the Lord after His resurrection charged with the feeding of His sheep), the succession of priests down to the present Episcopate holds us, with fullest right, in the bosom of the Church."

Hence when the Pelagian heresy broke out and its followers, with craft and trickery, strove to disturb the minds and souls of the faithful, the Fathers of the Council of Mileve (under the prompting and guidance of Augustine) referred to Innocent I for his approval the questions which they had discussed and the decrees which they had drawn up to settle the same. He in reply praised those Bishops for their zeal in behalf of religion and for their earnest devotion to the Roman Pontiff. "They

knew well," he said to them, "that from the Apostolic source answers always go out through every part of the world to those who seek them: in particular, whenever the rule of faith is the issue, I consider that all our brethren and colleagues in the Episcopate ought to have recourse to Peter only, that is, to the source of their title and honor, just as you, Beloved Brothers, have done in this instance, seeing that he can be helpful to all the Churches in common throughout the world."

Thus after the condemnation pronounced by the Roman Pontiffs against Pelagius and Celestius had reached those parts, Augustine, preaching to the people, uttered those memorable words: "Regarding this matter, the decisions of two Councils have been sent to the Apostolic See and from that See replies have come back. The cause is ended: would that the error also might at length be ended." These words indeed, in somewhat briefer form, have become proverbial: Rome has spoken, the cause is ended.

In another passage, after citing the decision whereby Pope Zozimus condemned and reprobated the Pelagians wherever they might be, the same Augustine declares: "In these words of the Apostolic See, the Catholic Faith rings out—so old and well established, so clear and sure that it were wicked for a Christian to doubt it."

OBEDIENCE TO THE CHURCH

Furthermore, whosoever obeys the Church which has received from her divine Spouse the riches of

heavenly grace that she might dispense them especially through the Sacraments, such a one, after the pattern of the Good Samaritan, pours oil and wine into the wounds of the children of Adam to cleanse the sinner of his sin, to strengthen the weak and the ailing and to fashion the souls of the just upon higher ideals of holy living. Let us admit that now and then some minister of Christ may have failed in his duty: did that mean that the power of Christ had lost its efficacy and come to naught? "And I say"—let us hear the Bishop of Hippo—"and we all say that it behooves the ministers of so great a judge to be upright; let the ministers be upright, if they will, but if they who sit upon the chair of Moses will not be upright, I nevertheless have been assured by my Master of Whom His Spirit said: 'This is He Who baptizeth'." Would that Augustine's words had been heeded by all who, in the past or in our day, after the manner of the Donatists, made the fall of this or that priest a pretext for rending the seamless garment of Christ and for miserably casting themselves away from the path of salvation.

We have seen how humbly Augustine, sublime genius as he was, submitted to the authority of the teaching Church, in the conviction that as long as he did so he would not vary by a hair-breadth from Catholic doctrine. Moreover, having carefully considered those words—"unless ye believe, ye shall not understand"—he knew full well that those who, holding fast to the faith, meditate with prayerful and submissive minds upon the word of God, are illumined with a heavenly light which is denied the

proud; but he also knew that priests, whose lips must keep knowledge, since it is their duty to explain suitably and defend the truths of revelation and open its meaning to the faithful, are obliged, so far as it may be given them of God, to search and penetrate the truths of faith.

Wherefore, prompted by uncreated Wisdom, through prayer and meditation on the divine mysteries, he achieved so much in his writings that he bequeathed as it were to posterity a vast and impressive body of sacred doctrine. Whoever, Venerable Brothers, is even slightly acquainted with these monumental works cannot but realize how keenly the Bishop of Hippo bent all the energies of his soul that he might gain a fuller knowledge of God. How truly he discerned in the universe of created things and its ordering the work of his Maker! How effectively he wrote and preached that the people under his charge might also attain this insight!

PROOF OF CREATOR'S WORK

"The beauty of earth," he said, "is the voice as it were of the speechless earth. You observe and see its loveliness, you see its fruitfulness, you see its wondrous forces, how it begets the living germ, how it not rarely brings forth even where no seed has been sown. These things you behold, and dwelling upon them, you in a way put questions to nature: your very searching is a questioning. But when, in wonderment, you have sought out and examined the ways of nature, when you have

come to appreciate its grandeur, its surpassing beauty and power, and to understand that it could not have such power in and of itself, forthwith it occurs to you that the world could not have gotten its being from itself, but only from the Creator. What you find is the voice of nature, bearing witness and calling on you to praise the Creator. When you consider the beauty of the world in all its parts, does not that very beauty give answer and declare: I did not make myself: God made me."

How often he extolled in splendid phrase the absolute perfection, beauty, goodness, eternity, immutability and power of the Creator, albeit he never ceased repeating that our thought of God comes nearer the truth than our words, while His being is far truer than anything we can think; and that the name which above all others befits the Creator is that which God Himself revealed when Moses asked by whom he was sent.

Augustine was not content with merely seeking to know the nature of God so far as the unaided powers of human intelligence might lead him. With the Sacred Scriptures lighting his way, and the Spirit of Wisdom guiding him, he focused his surpassing intellect upon the greatest of all mysteries which so many of the Fathers and of his other predecessors, with the utmost steadfastness and wonderful ardor, had upheld against the impious onslaughts of heresy—We mean the adorable Trinity of the Father and Son and Holy Ghost in the oneness of the divine nature.

Aglow with light from above, he treated this supreme doctrine and foundation of Catholic Faith with such depth and penetration that for the Doctors of all later time it was in a way sufficient to draw from Augustine's writings material wherewith they raised about theological truth such solid bulwarks that the shafts of wayward reason hurled in every age against this mystery, the farthest beyond the grasp of finite minds, were hurled in vain.

HIS STATEMENT ON THE TRINITY

Let Us cite the doctrine of the Bishop of Hippo: "In that Trinity those things are predicated of each Person severally which denote their reciprocal relations, such as Father and Son, and the Gift of both, namely the Holy Spirit. For the Father is not the Trinity, the Son is not the Trinity, the Gift is not the Trinity. But what is predicated of each as in Himself does not mean that they plurally are Three, but only One, the Trinity itself; thus the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God. Again, the Father is good, the Son is good, the Holy Spirit is good; likewise the Father is omnipotent, the Son is omnipotent, the Holy Spirit is omnipotent: and yet there are not three Gods nor three goods nor three omnipotents, but one God, good, omnipotent, the Trinity itself. So with everything else which imports not a reciprocal relation but a several ascription to each. For this names them according to essence, because here being is equivalent to being great, to

being good, to being wise, and whatever else each person in himself, or the Trinity itself, is called."

Concise indeed, and subtle, these utterances; yet their author, to help somewhat our understanding, makes use of most fitting illustrations—as for instance when he beholds the image of the Trinity reflected in the human soul which goes forward in the way of holiness. For then remembering God, it thinks of God and loves Him. So that we come to see, in some measure, how the Word is begotten of the Father, "Who in a manner has expressed in His coeternal Word, all that He has substantially," likewise how the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, and thus "gives an idea of the mutual love wherewith the Father and the Son love each other."

Thereupon Augustine reminds us to make this likeness of God in us clearer and lovelier day by day, right on to the end of our lives, so that when He shall come, "the divine image already graven in our souls may be perfected by the vision which then, the judgment over, shall be face to face, but which even now, though in a glass darkly, is for our weal."

ON DUAL NATURE OF CHRIST

Nor can we ever sufficiently admire the Doctor of Hippo for his exposition of the mysteries of the only-begotten Son of God clothed in human flesh, and for his insistence in so many words—which St. Leo the Great cites in his dogmatic epistle to Leo Augustus—"that we acknowledge

in Christ a twofold substance, the one, divine, by which He is equal to the Father, the other, human, by which the Father is greater. Yet Christ, though both, is not two but one: nor is God fourfold but threefold. For as the rational soul and the flesh form but one man, so God and man form but one Christ." Wisely, therefore, did Theodosius the Younger act in commanding that the great Doctor should be summoned, with every possible mark of respect, to the Council of Ephesus at which the Nestorian heresy was crushed: but Augustine's unexpected death prevented him from joining to the voices of the assembled Fathers his own, so earnest and forceful, in execration of the heretic who, so to speak, dared to divide Christ and to assail the divine Maternity of the most blessed Virgin.

Nor should we here omit, though we touch it only in passing, the fact that the dignity of Christ the King, in defense of which, and in order to stir up the devotion of the faithful, We published at the close of the Jubilee Year our Encyclical "Quas Primas," was more than once set forth by Augustine: witness the lessons taken from his writings which We saw fit to include in the liturgy of the Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ the King.

There is no one, perhaps, who does not know how grandly he discourses in his splendid work the "City of God" on the divine governance of all things and events, sweeping as it were in one broad survey over the history of the world with the aid of the knowledge he had gained through constant

study of the Bible and drawn from every human source which was then available. With the keen discernment that was his, he marks out and recognizes, in the stages and processes of human society, two cities builded by two loves: the earthly by the love of self even to the contempt of God; the other, heavenly, by the love of God even to the contempt of self, the first, Babylon, the second Jerusalem; and these "are mingled, and mingled they continue to be from the very beginning of human kind on to the end of the world." Yet is the outcome not one and the same for both, for the dwellers in Jerusalem are to reign forever with God while the slaves of Babylon are doomed to suffer for their sins, with the demons, through all eternity.

HIS VIEW OF HUMAN SOCIETY

Hence to the searching view of Augustine the history of human society appears as nothing else than the record of God's love unceasingly lavished on us by Him Who carries onward, through triumphs and through hardships alike, the heavenly City which He established, in such wise that he turns to its advantage even the madness and the wickedness of the earthly city—in keeping with those words of the Apostle, "to them that love God all things work together unto good, to such as according to His purpose are called to be saints."

Hence it must be pointed out that they act foolishly and stupidly who think that the course of events is controlled simply by the whim and

play of blind chance or by the desires and the ambitions of the powerful among men or by the ceaseless agitation of minds intent upon developing man's natural powers, furthering the arts and securing the good things of this life. On the contrary, the events of the natural order are meant only to serve in building up the City of God, to wit, by spreading the truth of the Gospel and helping on the salvation of souls in accordance with the hidden yet ever merciful design of Him Who "reacheth from end to end mightily and ordereth all things sweetly."

To dwell somewhat longer on this matter, let Us add that Augustine set the mark, or, more truly, the burning brand of vileness, of the paganism of the Greeks and Romans while some of our modern writers, frivolous and wanton, seem to be fairly carried away with enthusiasm for the pagan religion which in their judgment is of marvelous beauty, harmony and sweetness. Knowing, moreover, quite well that the people of his day were unhappily forgetful of God, he recalls, now with biting phrase and again with words full of indignation, all the evils—the coercions and absurdities, the atrocities and excesses—which the demons, through the worship of false gods, had brought into human life.

Nor can there be salvation for anyone in that vain ideal of fulfillment and perfection which the earthly city sets up for itself; since hardly anyone will realize it and, if anyone should, he will enjoy but an empty fleeting glory.

Augustine indeed praises the Romans of the elder day, "who despised their own private affairs for the sake of the republic, and for its treasury resisted avarice, consulted for the good of their country with a spirit of freedom, addicted neither to what their laws pronounced to be crime nor to lust. By all these acts, as by the true way, they pressed forward to honors, power and glory; they were honored amongst almost all nations, they imposed the laws of their empire upon many peoples." Yet, as he remarks a little farther on, what did they gain with all their striving, "except that most empty pomp of human glory in which they received their reward who burned with ardent desire of it, and for it with utmost ardor waged their wars."

ON CHRISTIAN RULERS

This is not to say that the joy of success in undertakings, or power itself—things which our Creator uses to accomplish the mysterious designs of His providence—are reserved only for those who condemn the heavenly City. The emperor Constantine was no worshiper of demons but a worshiper of the true God Himself; yet God endowed him with such fulness of earthly gifts as no one would even dare wish for. Likewise He granted prosperity and the fruits of victory after victory to Theodosius, who gloried more in being a member of the Church than in wearing an earthly crown, and who when rebuked by Ambrose for the slaughter at Thessalonica, "did penance in such wise that, while they prayed for him, the tears of

the people at seeing the imperial majesty humbled outdid their fears of it when enraged by their offenses."

Again, though the good things of this life are denied to no man, be he good or bad, and though adversity may befall the righteous and the wicked alike, yet it is beyond doubt that fortune and misfortune in this world are allotted by God's ordinance in furtherance of the heavenly City and its purpose, the welfare and salvation of souls.

Since, therefore, princes and rulers have their power from God in order that they, within the limits of their respective dominions, may cooperate as allies toward the realization of God's providential design, it is evident that they must never lose sight of the supreme end appointed for mankind; and hence, in providing for the temporal well-being of their people, they are bound not only to refrain from doing or enacting aught that may be detrimental to the laws of Christian justice and charity, but also to make it easier for their people to know and seek after the things that perish not.

"For neither do we say that certain Christian emperors were therefore happy because they ruled a long time, or, dying a peaceful death, left their sons to succeed them in the empire, or subdued the enemies of the republic, or were able both to guard against and to suppress the attempt of hostile citizens rising against them. These and other gifts or comforts of this irksome life even certain worshipers of demons have merited to receive, who do not belong to the kingdom of God to which such

gifts belong; and this is to be traced to the mercy of God, Who would not have those who believe in Him desire such things as the highest good. But we say that they are happy if they rule justly; if they are not lifted up amid the praises of those who pay them sublime honors and the obsequiousness of those who salute them with an excessive humility, but remember that they are men; if they make their power the handmaid of His majesty by using it for the greatest possible extension of His worship; if they fear, love, worship God; if more than their own they love that kingdom in which they are not afraid to have partners; if they are slow to punish, ready to pardon; if they apply that punishment as necessary to government and defense of the republic, and not in order to gratify their own enmity; if they grant pardon, not that iniquity may go unpunished, but with the hope that the transgressor may amend his ways; if they compensate with the lenity of mercy and the liberality of benevolence for whatever severity they may be compelled to decree; if their luxury is as much restrained as it might have been unrestrained; if they prefer to govern depraved desires rather than any nation whatever; and if they do all these things not through ardent desire of empty glory, but through love of eternal felicity, not neglecting to offer to the true God, Who is their God, for their sins, the sacrifices of humility, contrition, and prayer. Such Christian rulers, we say, are happy in the present time by hope, and are destined to be so in the enjoyment of the reality itself, when that which we wait for shall have come."

JUSTICE, CHARITY, HUMILITY

This is the form and pattern of the Christian ruler; none finer, none more perfect. But such an ideal no man can set up or set forth who puts his truth in human wisdom, blurred as this often is and more often still blinded by passion. But only he who, fashioned upon the teaching of the Gospel, has learned that he cannot rule over the commonwealth in accordance with the divinely established order—that is to say, in the best manner and with the happiest results—unless justice along with charity and humility cling to the very marrow of his soul. "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and they that have power over them are called beneficent. But you not so; but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger, and he that is the leader, as he that serveth."

Wherefore they are miserably deceived who direct the affairs of the State as though no account were to be taken of man's supreme end, nor of the right use of the goods of this life; while others, and not a few at that, go wrong in thinking that the laws by which the State is to be governed and the human race advanced cannot be squared with the precepts of Him Who said: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." Thus spoke Jesus Christ, Who endowed and fortified His Church with that most excellent, and everlasting Constitution which so many vicissitudes and so many trials during twenty centuries have

not hitherto shaken nor shall ever, even to the end of the world, break down.

Why, then, should those who rule the nations, and are so anxious for the welfare and safety of their peoples, hinder the action of the Church? Should they not rather, so far as circumstances permit, exert themselves in her behalf? The State has surely no reason to fear that the Church will encroach upon its specific rights and prerogatives. These rights, in fact, Christians from the earliest days, in obedience to the command of their Founder, have so carefully respected that, tormented as they were and even put to death, they could truly say: "Princes have persecuted me without cause."

Augustine, as usual, thus admirably expresses it: "What harm had the Christians done to the kingdoms of the world? Did their King forbid His soldiers to pay and render the Kings of earth what was due them? Did He not say to the Jews who tried to slander Him on this very point: 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's'? Did He not Himself pay tribute with coin from the mouth of the fish? His forerunner, when asked by the soldiers of the earthly kingdom what they should do to be saved, instead of telling them—Loose your belt, throw away your arms, desert your king in order to serve in the ranks of the Lord—did he not say to them—Do violence to no man, calumniate no man and be content with your pay? Did not one of His own soldiers, His dearly beloved adjutant, say to his comrades in arms, the provincial troops, as it were,

of Christ: 'Let every soul be subject to higher powers'? And later on—'Render therefore to all men their dues. Tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. Owe no man anything, but to love one another.' Did He not prescribe that the Church should pray for kings themselves? Wherein, then, did the Christians offend their rulers? What debt did they fail to pay? In what matter were they wanting of respect to earthly potentates? Therefore, the kings of earth persecuted the Christians without cause."

CHURCH'S AID TO THE STATE

Certainly nothing more should be required of Christ's disciples than that they obey the just laws of their nation—provided that they be not forbidden to do what the law of Christ commands nor commanded to do what His law forbids; otherwise, conflict between Church and State will be the result. It is hardly necessary in this connection to insist on what, as We think, has already been stated clearly enough—namely, that no harm can come to the State from the Church, but, on the contrary, important help and advantage. As regards this matter, We see no reason for repeating the beautiful words of the Bishop of Hippo which We cited in Our latest Encyclical, "De Christiana Iuventutis Educatione," or those others, no less persuasive, which Our immediate predecessor, Benedict XV, in his Encyclical "Pacem Dei Munus," cited in order to show more clearly that

the Church has constantly endeavored to bind the nations together under the Christian law, and likewise has done everything possible to spread among men the blessings of justice, charity and universal peace so that the peoples might strive together "toward a certain unity making for glory and prosperity."

However, after tracing the features, so to speak, of the divine administration and setting forth in general terms all that, in his judgment, concerned Church and State, Augustine does not stop here but goes on to contemplate with searching glance the operations of divine grace and to show how it inwardly and mysteriously moves the intellect and will of man. What this grace of God can accomplish in the soul he had already experienced when at Milan a wonderful change, on a sudden, was wrought in him and he perceived that the darkness of doubt had all cleared away.

"How sweet did it at once become to me to want the sweetness of those trifles! What I feared to be parted from was now a joy to part with. For Thou didst cast them forth from me, Thou true and highest sweetness. Thou castest them forth, and in their stead didst enter in Thyself, sweeter than all pleasure, though not to flesh and blood brighter than all light, but more hidden than all depths, higher than all honor but not to the high in their own conceits."

WRITINGS AGAINST ERRORS

Meanwhile, the Bishop of Hippo took for his

teacher and guide the Holy Scriptures, especially the Epistles of the Apostle Paul, who also had long before brought in a marvelous way to the service of Christ. He adhered to the doctrine handed down by saintly men and to the Catholic sense of the faithful. With increasing vigor he smote the Pelagians, who stubbornly maintained that the redemption of men through Jesus Christ availed for naught. Finally, prompted by the Divine Spirit, he spent long years of study on the undoing of the human race in consequence of the first parents' fall, on the relations of God's grace to man's free will, and on the question of what is called predestination. So subtle and successful was his study that thenceforward he was named and considered the Doctor of Grace, and, leading the way, gave assistance to Catholic writers of all later ages, while at the same time he prevented them, in the discussion of these most difficult matters, from going to either erroneous extreme, that is to say, from teaching, on one hand, that in man, fallen as he is from original innocence, free will is but a name and no reality as the early Reformers and the Jansenists declared; or, on the other hand, that divine grace is not a gratuitous gift and is not able to do all things, as the Pelagians vainly imagined.

Just here, to stress some practical points which the modern mind may dwell upon with profit: it is obvious that those who read Augustine will not be trapped in that pernicious error which spread abroad during the eighteenth century, to-wit, that the instinctive tendencies of the will are, all of

them, good, and hence are neither to be feared nor checked. On this false principle are based those schemes of education (condemned in our recent Encyclical on "The Christian Education of Youth") which have for their final result the indiscriminate treatment of the sexes and the total neglect of precaution against the nascent passions of childhood and youth. Also from the same source comes the unrestrained liberty of writing and reading, of staging, and witnessing plays which involve not merely snares and dangers for innocence and purity but also actual downfall and ruin; and again the indecent fashions in dress for the banishing of which Christian women can never work hard enough.

Augustine teaches that man since the fall of our first parents is no longer possessed of the uprightness in which he was created and through which, so long as he enjoyed it, he was easily and readily led to right action. In this present mortal condition, on the contrary, he must withstand and restrain the evil desires, by which he is drawn and driven—as the Apostle declares: "But I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind and captivating me in the law of sin that is in my members."

WARRING AGAINST PASSION

Beautiful are the words of Augustine on this same subject: "So it is, my brethren, as long as we live this life. So we also who are grown old in the struggle have fewer enemies; yet enemies we have.

Wearied indeed these foes of ours because of their age, yet, wearied as they are they cease not to molest the quiet of our declining years with all manner of sensuous stirrings. In youth the battle is sharper; we know what it is, we have fought it out. As long as you bear this mortal body, sin wars upon you, but let it not reign over you." Not reign—what does that mean? That you obey not the lusts thereof. Once you begin to obey, it reigns. And what is obeying save yielding your members as instruments of iniquity unto sin? Yield not thy members as instruments of iniquity unto sin.

Through His Spirit, God hath given thee power to restrain thy members. Rises passion: do thou restrain thy members. What is it going to do, that rising passion? Restrain thy members: yield not thy members as instruments of iniquity unto sin, nor arm thine adversary against thyself. Restrain thy feet lest they go after what is unlawful. Passion has risen; restrain thy members. Restrain thy hands from all wickedness. Restrain thine eyes lest they gaze upon evil; restrain thine ears that they hear not willingly any lustful word. Restrain thy whole body, restrain its sides, restrain its upper parts and its lower as well. What doth passion do? It can spring up: it cannot overcome. And springing, time after time to no effect, it learns at length to spring no more."

If we, preparing for such combat, put on the armor of salvation after we have begun to keep away from sin, the onset of our enemies will gradu-

ally be hurled back and their forces weakened, while we shall take our flight to that abode of rest where joy unbounded marks our triumph, forever.

Now it will be wholly due to the grace of God, which inwardly enlightens the mind and strengthens the will, if spite of so many drawbacks and struggles we gain the victory; the grace of God, We say, of Him Who, having created us, is able also out of the plenitude of His wisdom and power to inflame our souls and wholly fill them with charity.

Rightly, therefore, is the Church, which through the Sacraments pours out grace upon us, called holy, for not only through her continuous and untiring activity are men united closely with God in bonds of friendship and preserved therein, but many of them under her guidance are raised to invincible greatness of soul, to perfect holiness of life, to heroic achievement. Is there not, year by year, an increasing number of martyrs, virgins and confessors whom she holds up to the admiration of her children for their imitation? Are these not fairest flowers of solid virtue, of chastity and charity which the grace of God transplants from earth to heaven?

Only they stand still and languish in their natural weakness who resist the divine influence and will not make right use of their freedom. Likewise, the grace of God permits that We despair not of any man's salvation as long as he lives on earth, and moreover, that We hope, for all, greater increase in charity day by day.

FOUNDATION OF HUMILITY

In that grace also lies the foundation of humility or self-effacement, since even the most perfect cannot but remember the saying: "What hast thou that thou hast not received; and if thou hast received why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received?" Nor can such a one fail of thankfulness to Him Who "enables the weak, with His help, invincibly to will what is good and, invincibly, to will not to abandon it." And most graciously Christ Jesus spurs us on to ask for the gifts of His grace: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." Even the grace of perseverance "can be merited by prayer." For this reason, in the churches, prayer both public and private is offered up unceasingly. "For when has the Church ever failed to pray for unbelievers and for her enemies that they might be led to believe? When has any of the faithful ever had an unbelieving friend or relative or spouse, and did not beseech the Lord to make him docile of mind in regard to the Christian faith? And who was there ever who did not pray in his own behalf that he might persevere in the Lord?"

Wherefore, Venerable Brothers, do you, and with you your clergy and people—under the favor of the Doctor of Grace—pray earnestly for those in particular who share not the Catholic faith or who have wandered from the right path. And

besides, take the utmost care that those who seem fitted for and called to the priesthood be trained in holiness, inasmuch as they, in virtue of their office, are to become dispensers of divine grace.

Possidius, who was the first to write of Augustine's life and works, even then declared that in comparison with those who had read his works, "They who were able to see and hear him in person speaking in church, and especially holding converse with men, drew by far the greater profit. Not only was he a scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven who brought forth out of his treasure new things and old—not only one of those merchants who, when he had found a pearl of great price, sold all that he had and bought it; but one of those to whom it was written, 'So speak ye, and so do,' and of whom the Saviour said: 'He that shall do and teach, he shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven'." For, to begin with the highest of all virtues, Augustine, renouncing everything else, so earnestly desired and sought the love of God, so constantly increased it in himself, that with good reason he is depicted with a burning heart in his hand. Can anyone who, if only for once, has read the "Confessions," ever forget the colloquy between son and mother at the window of their house in Ostia? Is not the story so vivid and so tender that we seem to behold Augustine and Monica side by side absorbed in the contemplation of heavenly things?

DISCOURSING ON TRUTH

"We were discoursing then together, alone, very

sweetly; and forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, we were enquiring between ourselves in the presence of the Truth, which Thou art, of what sort the eternal life of the saints was to be, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man. But yet we gasped with the mouth of our heart, after those heavenly streams of Thy fountain, the fountain of life, which is with Thee; that being bedewed thence according to our capacity, we might in some sort meditate upon so high a mystery. . . . And while we were discoursing and panting after her (divine wisdom), we slightly touched on her with the whole effort of our heart. And we sighed and there we left bound the first-fruits of the Spirit; and returned to the utterance of our mouth, where the spoken word hath both its beginning and its end. And what is like unto Thy Word, our Lord, who abideth in Himself nor even groweth old but maketh all things new?"

Nor be it said that such withdrawals of mind and spirit from the body were uncommon in his life. For if he had any time left over from his daily duties and occupations, he spent it in meditation on the Holy Scriptures with which he was so familiar, and from them obtained the joy and light of truth. From the consideration of God's works and of the mysteries of His boundless love for us, Augustine's thought and feeling rose, sublime, to the divine perfections themselves, to be immersed therein as far as was given him through abundance

of heavenly grace. And then, as though to share with us his inmost thought, he says: "And this I often do, this delights me, and as far as I may be free from necessary duties, unto this pleasure do I betake myself. Nor in all these things which I run over communing with Thee, can I find any safe place for my soul, but in Thee; whither my scattered parts may be gathered, and nothing of me withdraw from Thee. And sometimes Thou admittest me to an affection very unusual, far inward to a sweetness whereof I know only that should it reach its fulness in me it will be something which is not this life." Wherefore, he cried out: "Too late have I loved Thee, O Beauty so ancient yet so new: too late have I loved Thee."

How lovingly he dwelt in contemplation on the life of Christ Whose likeness he strove to render each day more perfect in himself and to return love for love, just as in his counsel to virgins he urged them: "Let Him be fastened in your whole heart Who for you was fastened to the cross."

HUMILITY, LOVE OF SOULS

Indeed, since he continually burned more ardently with the love of God, he also made incredible progress in the other virtues. No one can fail to admire a man who, because of his surpassing genius and sanctity, was venerated and praised, consulted and heeded by all—and yet, in his writings which were to be published and in his letters, most emphatically insisted that the tributes paid to him should be referred to the Author of

all good as due to Him alone, while he encouraged others and, so far as the truth allowed, extolled their merits. Not only that: to his brother bishops he paid honor and reverence, to those great ones especially who had preceded him, Cyprian and Gregory of Nazianzen, Hilary and John Chrysostom, Ambrose, his master in the faith, whom he revered as a father and whose precepts and achievements he often recalled. In Augustine there also shone that love of souls which cannot be separated from the love of God, his love especially for those whom he ruled by virtue of his pastoral office.

From the time when, under divine inspiration, with the approval of the Bishop Valerius and by choice of the people, he was, first, ordained to the priesthood, and then appointed to the See of Hippo, he gave himself wholly to the care of his flock, that nourishing them with the food of sound doctrine and protecting them against the attacks of the wolves he might lead them to eternal happiness. Strenuously, therefore, though with charity for the erring, did he combat heresy, warning his people against the fallacies employed at the time by the Manicheans, Donatists, Pelagians and Arians; refuting these heretics in such a way that he not only checked the spread of their false doctrine and rescued the souls which they had snatched as their prey, but also won back the heretics themselves to the fold of the Catholic faith. Ever ready he was to discuss, even in public debate, with full reliance upon the divine assistance, upon the inherent power and force of the truth, and upon the

steadfast faith of the people. If any writings of the heretics fell into his hands, he lost no time in refuting them point for point, never wearied or overcome by the foolishness of their opinions, the thorny subtlety of their reasoning, their stubbornness, or the outrages they heaped upon him.

HIS CHARITY OF SPIRIT

Though he fought so valiantly for the truth, he ceased not to pray that God would bring to a better sense these adversaries whom he enfolded in his kindliness and Christian charity. From his writings one can see with what humbleness of mind and vigor of persuasion he addressed them. "Let them rage against you who know not what toil it takes to find the truth, how difficult it is to avoid error: Let them rage against you who know not how rare and arduous a thing it is to overcome the temptings of the flesh with the calmness of a pious mind. Finally, let them rage against you who never were duped with error such as that wherewith they see you duped. But I who, after long and bitter struggle, came at last to recognize that plainly manifest truth which is perceived without the garble of silly tales—I who eagerly sought out all those vain imaginings which hold you bound and fettered by long habituation, who listened to them attentively, believed them rashly, pressed them urgently on as many as I could and defended them against others with vigor and persistence—I absolutely cannot rage against you. As at that time I bore with myself, so now I must bear with

you and treat you as patiently as my dearest friends treated me when I madly and blindly went astray in your error."

How, then, could the Bishop of Hippo, with his zeal for religion, his untiring efforts and his kindness of heart, be disappointed or fail to get results? The Manicheans were brought back to the fold of Christ, the Donatist breach or schism was healed, the Pelagians were completely put down. So that, after Augustine's death, Possidius could write of him: "He was a memorable man, a principal member of the Lord's body, ever concerned and watchful for the welfare of the Church universal. It was given him as by divine dispensation to enjoy, even in this life, the fruit of his labors—first of all, in the Church of Hippo and the region about it which was his principal charge, he saw perfect unity and peace. Then in other portions of Africa he saw that, through his own efforts or through the work of the priests whom he had provided, the Church of the Lord had sprung up and flourished. He rejoiced in knowing that the Manicheans, Donatists, Pelagians and Pagans for the most part had given in and returned to the Church of God. Upon the progress and endeavors of all good men he looked with favor and delight. With pious and holy compassion he tolerated the shortcomings of his brethren; and he grieved over the iniquities of the wicked, whether within the Church or outside the Church, rejoicing always, as I have said, in the gains in the Lord's work and sorrowing for the losses."

FAITHFUL FATHER TO HIS FLOCK

In the great affairs of Africa and of the Church universal as well, Augustine showed himself strong, unconquerable—but for his flock he was a father—none more kindly and solicitous. He used to preach frequently to his people, taking his text, as a rule, from the Psalms, the Gospel of John or the Epistles of Paul, and explaining them in terms adapted to the capacity of plain and simple minds; or, again, denouncing with good effect any abuses or vices that might have crept in among the people of Hippo. Long and earnestly, too, he labored not only to reconcile sinners with God, to relieve the poor and plead for the guilty—but also (though he complained of such things as distractions and interruptions) to settle quarrels and brawls about worldly matters among the faithful, thus overcoming his personal distaste in order to exercise episcopal charity.

This charity and greatness of soul shone forth most brightly in the crisis brought about through the devastation of Africa by the Vandals, who spared neither the dignity of the priesthood nor the sanctity of the churches. While some of the bishops and priests were hesitating as to what they should do amid so many awful calamities, the saintly old man, in reply to one who had asked his opinion, wrote frankly that, come what might, it was not permissible for any priest to leave his people, seeing that the faithful could not do without his ministration. "Does it not occur to us," he said, "when in the extremity of imminent danger

escape is out of the question, how the people of both sexes and of every age crowd into the church—some seeking baptism, others reconciliation, others again the performing of penance, while all are eager for the celebration and administration of the sacraments?

"Then, if there be no ministers, what an awful doom overtakes those who go out of this world unregenerate or unshriven! What anguish for their dear ones who will not have them to share the blessed rest of eternal life! What wailing from all, and from some what blaspheming, at the absence of minister and ministration! See what comes of the fear of temporal evils, what cumulation of evils everlasting.

"But if the ministers are at their post, then, according to the strength the Lord grants them, they supply every need of their people; some are baptized, others reconciled; none is deprived of the communion of the Body of the Lord; all are comforted, all edified, all exhorted to beseech the Lord that in His almighty power He ward off whatever they fear; and all so minded that, if the chalice cannot pass from them, they pray His will be done Who can will no evil."

He closed with these words: "But he who flees so withdraws from the flock of Christ the food which nourishes its spiritual life, he is the hireling who seeth the wolf coming and fleeth, because he hath no care for the sheep." Such warnings, moreover, Augustine reinforced by his own example. When his episcopal city was besieged by the barbarians,

the magnanimous Shepherd stayed there with his people, and there he rendered up his soul to God.

FOUNDING OF RELIGIOUS HOUSES

To add a point which is needed to complete Our eulogy of Augustine, history bears witness that the holy Doctor of the Church had seen at Milan, outside the walls of the city, a "hostel of the saints" under the fostering care of Ambrose and, shortly after his mother's death, had come to know in Rome a number of monasteries, some for men and some for women. Wherefore, hardly had he landed on the shore of Africa when he began to think of leading souls to perfection and holiness in the religious life, founded a monastery on an estate of his own, put away all earthly cares, and "then for nearly three years, with his disciples, lived with God in fasting, prayer and good works, meditating day and night on the law of the Lord." Raised to the priesthood, he made a similar foundation near the church in Hippo and "began to live with God's servants after the manner and rule established under the holy Apostles: according to which no member of the society was to possess anything of his own, but all things were to be in common and apportioned to each as he might need." After his elevation to the episcopal dignity, however, as he did not wish to forego the advantages of community life nor, on the other hand, to have the monastery open to all guests and visitors calling on the Bishop of Hippo, he established in his own episcopal house a monastery for clerics. These were

obliged to relinquish all claim to their family holdings, to live the common life—removed indeed from the allurements of the world and devoid of luxury in any form, yet not overly austere or exacting—and at the same time to perform the duties of charity toward God and neighbor.

To the women, again, who led the religious life in a nearby convent with Augustine's own sister as superior, he gave an admirable rule, full of wisdom and moderation. This is followed even now by many religious Orders of men and women, not only by those who are known as Augustinians but by others also who have received from their several founders the original rule with additional statutes peculiar to each. The seed of this institution for the development of a more perfect life Augustine sowed among his own; but thereby he benefited not Christian Africa alone, but the Church universal, which in the course of time has gained and still does gain from these forces so much service and advantage.

This excellent work, even during Augustine's lifetime, produced the happiest results. Possidius tells us that under concession of the Father and Lawgiver, in response to petitions from all sides, religious men in great numbers went forth in every direction, kindling fire from fire as it were, to lay new foundations and to aid the Churches of Africa by their doctrine and holy example. Well, therefore, might Augustine rejoice at this splendid activity of religious life so fully in keeping with his desires. Such indeed was his joy that he on occasion

declared: "I who write these things have ardently loved that perfection whereof the Lord spoke when He said to the rich young man, 'Go, sell whatever thou hast, and give to the poor and thou shall have treasure in heaven, and come, follow me.' So, not as of my own strength but with the help of His grace, I did. True, I was not rich, yet not on that account will my merit be less. For the Apostles themselves, who were the first to do thus, were not rich. But he gives up the whole world who gives up both what he has and what he desires to have. How far I have gone on the way of perfection, I know better than any other man; but God knows better than I. This course I urge others to take with all the power that is in me, and in the name of the Lord I have for my fellows all those who through my ministry have been persuaded to take it."

ENCOURAGE VOCATIONS

It is Our earnest desire that today, the world over, there be raised up many "sowers of chaste counsels" like the Holy Doctor, men who with prudence indeed, but also with energy and perseverance, will encourage vocations to the religious and sacerdotal life (God's calling, of course, presupposed), in order that more efficacious measures and steps may be taken to prevent weakening of the Chrisitan spirit and gradual decay of morality.

We have outlined, Venerable Brothers, the achievements and merits of a man whose penetrating genius, wealth and elevation of doctrine, sanctity carried to the highest degree of perfection, and

invincible defense of Catholic truth have been equalled by none or by very few of those who from the beginning of the human race down to this present time have attained distinction. More than one who spoke in praise of Augustine We have already cited, but how cordially, how justly does Jerome address him, as his contemporary and intimate friend: "I am resolved to love thee, to welcome thee, to honor thee, to admire thee and to uphold as my own what thou shalt say." And again: "Take heart; thou art famed in all the world. The Catholics hail and venerate thee as the restorer of the ancient faith, and—a mark of still greater glory—all heretics abhor thee. Me also they hate just as they hate thee, as though to slay in desire those whom they cannot kill with the sword."

We have it, then, most deeply at heart, Venerable Brothers, that he to whose memory We, at the approach of his fifteen hundredth anniversary, have with great pleasure devoted this Encyclical Letter, should be commemorated also by your peoples in such manner that all may do him honor, and especially that all may strive to imitate him and give thanks to God for the signal benefits which He has conferred on the Church through this great Doctor.

In this connection, We know that the example will be set, as is fitting, by the illustrious order of Augustine's sons who preserve and guard with piety in the Church of St. Peter in Ciel d'Oro at Pavia the ashes of their Father and Lawgiver which

Our predecessor of happy memory, Leo XIII, graciously restored to their keeping. Would that the faithful would gather there in great numbers from all parts of the world to venerate his sacred remains and to gain the indulgence which We have granted.

ASKS THAT SAINT BE HONORED

We cannot refrain from expressing here the hope We cherish and Our expectation that the International Eucharistic Congress soon to be held at Carthage will, besides marking a triumph for Christ Jesus hidden under the sacramental veils, pay a tribute of honor to Augustine, since the Congress is to meet in the city where of old our Saint overcame the heretics and strengthened the Christians in their faith—in that Latin Africa whose ancient glories no age can ever blot out and which gave to the world that splendid light of wisdom—not far from Hippo, whose blessed lot it was to behold so long the example of his virtues and enjoy his pastoral care. Under such circumstances, it cannot but come to pass that the memory of the holy Doctor and his teaching on the August Sacrament (which We have omitted here as being already known in part and familiar to great numbers of the faithful from the liturgy of the Church) will appear to the minds, nay more to the eyes, of those who attend the Congress.

Finally, We exhort all faithful Christians, and those especially who will gather at Carthage, to invoke Augustine's intercession before the throne

of God's mercy in order that happier days may dawn for the Church and for those dwelling in the vast regions of Africa, both natives and strangers, who as yet know nothing of Catholic truth, or dissent from us; that the former may not refuse the light of the Gospel teaching brought to them by our missionaries; that the latter delay not to take refuge in the bosom of loving Mother Church.

Meantime, as a presage of heavenly graces and a token of Our paternal good-will, We most lovingly in the Lord bestow upon you, Venerable Brothers, and upon all your clergy and people, Our Apostolic blessing.

Given at St. Peter's in Rome, the twentieth day of April, on the Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, in the year nineteen hundred thirty, the ninth of Our Pontificate.

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ENCYCLICAL LETTER OF
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ENCYCLICAL LETTER

OF HIS HOLINESS

PIUS XI

BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE

POPE

TO THE VENERABLE BRETHREN, PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS AND OTHER LOCAL ORDINARIES ENJOYING PEACE AND COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE

ON CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

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ENCYCLICAL

OF

POPE PIUS XI

ON

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

In View of Present Conditions, Needs, Errors and Vices That Affect the Family and Society

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ENCYCLICAL LETTER

TO OUR VENERABLE BRETHREN
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ON CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

IN VIEW OF THE PRESENT CONDITIONS NEEDS ERRORS AND VICES THAT AFFECT THE FAMILY AND SOCIETY

POPE PIUS XI

VENERABLE BRETHREN AND BELOVED CHILDREN

HEALTH AND APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION

OW great is the dignity of chaste wedlock, Venerable Brethren, may be judged best from this that Christ Our Lord, Son of the Eternal Father, having assumed the nature of fallen man, not only, with His loving desire of compassing the redemption of our race, ordained it in an especial manner as the principle and foundation of domestic society and therefore of all human intercourse, but also raised it to the rank of a truly and great sacrament of the New Law, restored it to the original purity of its divine institution, and accordingly entrusted all its discipline and care to His spouse the Church.

In order, however, that amongst men of every nation and every age the desired fruits may be obtained from this renewal of matrimony, it is necessary, first of all, that men's minds be illuminated with the true doctrine of Christ regarding it; and secondly, that Christian spouses, the weakness of their wills strengthened by the internal grace of God, shape all their ways of thinking and of acting in conformity with that pure law of Christ so as to obtain true peace and happiness for themselves and for their families.

Yet not only do We, looking with paternal eye on the universal world from this Apostolic See as from a watch-tower, but you, also, Venerable Brethren, see, and seeing deeply grieve

with Us that a great number of men, forgetful of that divine work of redemption, either entirely ignore or shamelessly deny the great sanctity of Christian wedlock, or relying on the false principles of a new and utterly perverse morality, too often trample it under foot. And since these most pernicious errors and depraved morals have begun to spread even amongst the faithful and are gradually gaining ground, in Our office as Christ's Vicar upon earth and Supreme Shepherd and Teacher We consider it Our duty to raise Our voice to keep the flock committed to Our care from poisoned pastures and, as far as in Us lies, to preserve it from harm.

We have decided therefore to speak to you, Venerable Brethren, and through you to the whole Church of Christ and indeed to the whole human race, on the nature and dignity of Christian marriage, on the advantages and benefits which accrue from it to the family and to human society itself, on the errors contrary to this most important point of the Gospel teaching, on the vices opposed to conjugal union, and lastly on the principal remedies to be applied. In so doing We follow the footsteps of Our predecessor, Leo XIII, of happy memory, whose Encyclical *Arcanum*,[1] published fifty years ago, We hereby confirm and make Our own, and while We wish to expound more fully certain points called for by the circumstances of our times, nevertheless We declare that, far from being obsolete, it retains its full force at the present day.

And to begin with that same Encyclical, which is wholly concerned in vindicating the divine institution of matrimony, its sacramental dignity, and its perpetual stability, let it be repeated as an immutable and inviolable fundamental doctrine that matrimony was not instituted or restored by man but by God; not by man were the laws made to strengthen and confirm and elevate it but by God, the Author of nature, and by Christ Our Lord by Whom nature was redeemed, and hence these laws cannot be subject to any human decrees or to any contrary pact even of the spouses themselves. This is the doctrine of Holy Scripture;[2] this is the constant tradition of the Universal Church; this the solemn definition of the sacred Council of Trent, which declares and establishes from the words of Holy Writ itself that God is the Author of the perpetual stability of the marriage bond, its unity and its firmness.[3]

1Encycl. *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, 10 Febr. 1880.
2*Gen.*, I, 27-28; II, 22-23; MATTH., XIX, 3 sqq.; *Eph.*, V, 23 sqq.
3Conc. Trid., Sess. XXIV.

Yet although matrimony is of its very nature of divine institution, the human will, too, enters into it and performs a most noble part. For each individual marriage, inasmuch as it is a conjugal union of a particular man and woman, arises only from the free consent of each of the spouses; and this free act of the will, by which each party hands over and accepts those rights proper to the state of marriage,[4] is so necessary to constitute true marriage that it cannot be supplied by any human power.[5] This freedom, however, regards only the question whether the contracting parties really wish to enter upon matrimony or to marry this particular person; but the nature of matrimony is entirely independent of the free will of man, so that if one has once contracted matrimony he is thereby subject to its divinely made laws and its essential properties. For the Angelic Doctor, writing on conjugal honour and on the offspring which is the fruit of marriage, says: "These things are so contained in matrimony by the marriage pact itself that, if anything to the contrary were expressed in the consent which makes the marriage, it would not be a true marriage."[6]

By matrimony, therefore, the souls of the contracting parties are joined and knit together more directly and more intimately than are their bodies, and that not by any passing affection of sense or spirit, but by a deliberate and firm act of the will; and from this union of souls by God's decree, a sacred and inviolable bond arises. Hence the nature of this contract, which is proper and peculiar to it alone, makes it entirely different both from the union of animals entered into by the blind instinct of nature alone in which neither reason nor free will plays a part, and also from the haphazard unions of men, which are far removed from all true and honourable unions of will and enjoy none of the rights of family life.

From this it is clear that legitimately constituted authority has the right and therefore the duty to restrict, to prevent, and to punish those base unions which are opposed to reason and to nature; but since it is a matter which flows from human nature itself, no less certain is the teaching of Our predecessor, Leo XIII of happy memory:[7] "In choosing a state of life there is no doubt but that it is in the power and discretion of each one to prefer one or the other: either to embrace the counsel of virginity given by Jesus Christ, or to bind himself in the

4Cod. iur. can., c. 1081 § 2. 5Cod. iur. can., c. 1081 § 1.
6S. Thom. Aquin., *Summa theol.*, p. III, Supplem. 9, XLIX, art. 3.
7Encycl. *Rerum novarum*, 15 May 1891.

bonds of matrimony. To take away from man the natural and primeval right of marriage, to circumscribe in any way the principal ends of marriage laid down in the beginning by God Himself in the words 'Increase and multiply,'[8] is beyond the power of any human law."

Therefore the sacred partnership of true marriage is constituted both by the will of God and the will of man. From God comes the very institution of marriage, the ends for which it was instituted, the laws that govern it, the blessings that flow from it; while man, through generous surrender of his own person made to another for the whole span of life, becomes, with the help and cooperation of God, the author of each particular marriage, with the duties and blessings annexed thereto from divine institution.

I.

Now when We come to explain, Venerable Brethren, what are the blessings that God has attached to true matrimony, and how great they are, there occur to Us the words of that illustrious Doctor of the Church whom We commemorated recently in Our Encyclical *Ad salutem* on the occasion of the fifteenth centenary of his death:[9] "These," says St. Augustine, "are all the blessings of matrimony on account of which matrimony itself is a blessing; offspring, conjugal faith and the sacrament."[10] And how under these three heads is contained a splendid summary of the whole doctrine of Christian marriage, the holy Doctor himself expressly declares when he said: "By conjugal faith it is provided that there should be no carnal intercourse outside the marriage bond with another man or woman; with regard to offspring, that children should be begotten of love, tenderly cared for and educated in a religious atmosphere; finally, in its sacramental aspect that the marriage bond should not be broken and that a husband or wife, if separated, should not be joined to another even for the sake of offspring. This we regard as the law of marriage by which the fruitfulness of nature is adorned and the evil of incontinence is restrained."[11]

Thus amongst the blessings of marriage, the child holds the first place. And indeed the Creator of the human race Himself, Who in His goodness wished to use men as His helpers in

8*Gen.*, I, 28.
9Encycl. *Ad salutem*, 20 April 1930.
10St. August., *De bono coniug.*, cap. 24, n. 32.
11St. August., *De Gen. ad litt.*, lib. IX, cap. 7, n. 12.

the propagation of life, taught this when, instituting marriage in Paradise, He said to our first parents, and through them to all future spouses: "Increase and multiply, and fill the earth."[12] As St. Augustine admirably deduces from the words of the holy Apostle Saint Paul to Timothy[13] when he says: "The Apostle himself is therefore a witness that marriage is for the sake of generation: 'I wish,' he says, 'young girls to marry.' And, as if someone said to him, 'Why?,' he immediately adds: 'To bear children, to be mothers of families.' "[14]

How great a boon of God this is, and how great a blessing of matrimony is clear from a consideration of man's dignity and of his sublime end. For man surpasses all other visible creatures by the superiority of his rational nature alone. Besides, God wishes men to be born not only that they should live and fill the earth, but much more that they may be worshippers of God, that they may know Him and love Him and finally enjoy Him for ever in heaven; and this end, since man is raised by God in a marvellous way to the supernatural order, surpasses all that eye hath seen, and ear heard, and all that hath entered into the heart of man.[15] From which it is easily seen how great a gift of divine goodness and how remarkable a fruit of marriage are children born by the omnipotent power of God through the cooperation of those bound in wedlock.

But Christian parents must also understand that they are destined not only to propagate and preserve the human race on earth, indeed not only to educate any kind of worshippers of the true God, but children who are to become members of the Church of Christ, to raise up fellow-citizens of the Saints, and members of God's household,[16] that the worshippers of God and Our Saviour may daily increase.

For although Christian spouses even if sanctified themselves cannot transmit sanctification to their progeny, nay, although the very natural process of generating life has become the way of death by which original sin is passed on to posterity, nevertheless, they share to some extent in the blessings of that primeval marriage of Paradise, since it is theirs to offer their offspring to the Church in order that by this most fruitful Mother of the children of God they may be regenerated through the laver of Baptism unto supernatural justice and finally be made living members of Christ, partakers of immortal life, and

12*Gen.*, I, 28.
13*I Tim.*, V, 14.
14St. August., *De bono coniug.*, cap. 24, n. 32.
15*I Cor.*, II, 9.
16*Eph.*, II, 19.

heirs of that eternal glory to which we all aspire from our inmost heart.

If a true Christian mother weigh well these things, she will indeed understand with a sense of deep consolation that of her the words of Our Saviour were spoken: "A woman . . . when she hath brought forth the child remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world;"[17] and proving herself superior to all the pains and cares and solicitudes of her maternal office with a more just and holy joy than that of the Roman matron, the mother of the Gracchi, she will rejoice in the Lord crowned as it were with the glory of her offspring. Both husband and wife, however, receiving these children with joy and gratitude from the hand of God, will regard them as a talent committed to their charge by God, not only to be employed for their own advantage or for that of an earthly commonwealth, but to be restored to God with interest on the day of reckoning.

The blessing of offspring, however, is not completed by the mere begetting of them, but something else must be added, namely the proper education of the offspring. For the most wise God would have failed to make sufficient provision for children that had been born, and so for the whole human race, if He had not given to those to whom He had entrusted the power and right to beget them, the power also and the right to educate them. For no one can fail to see that children are incapable of providing wholly for themselves, even in matters pertaining to their natural life, and much less in those pertaining to the supernatural, but require for many years to be helped, instructed, and educated by others. Now it is certain that both by the law of nature and of God this right and duty of educating their offspring belongs in the first place to those who began the work of nature by giving them birth, and they are indeed forbidden to leave unfinished this work and so expose it to certain ruin. But in matrimony provision has been made in the best possible way for this education of children that is so necessary, for, since the parents are bound together by an indissoluble bond, the care and mutual help of each is always at hand.

Since, however, We have spoken fully elsewhere on the Christian education of youth,[18] let Us sum it all up by quoting once more the words of St. Augustine: "As regards the offspring it is provided that they should be begotten lovingly and

[17] John, XVI, 21. [18] Encycl. *Divini illius Magistri*, 31 Dec. 1929.

educated religiously,"[19]—and this is also expressed succinctly in the Code of Canon Law—"The primary end of marriage is the procreation and the education of children."[20]

Nor must We omit to remark, in fine, that since the duty entrusted to parents for the good of their children is of such high dignity and of such great importance, every use of the faculty given by God for the procreation of new life is the right and the privilege of the married state alone, by the law of God and of nature, and must be confined absolutely within the sacred limits of that state.

The second blessing of matrimony which We said was mentioned by St. Augustine, is the blessing of conjugal honour which consists in the mutual fidelity of the spouses in fulfilling the marriage contract, so that what belongs to one of the parties by reason of this contract sanctioned by divine law, may not be denied to him or permitted to any third person; nor may there be conceded to one of the parties anything which, being contrary to the rights and laws of God and entirely opposed to matrimonial faith, can never be conceded.

Wherefore, conjugal faith, or honour, demands in the first place the complete unity of matrimony which the Creator Himself laid down in the beginning when He wished it to be not otherwise than between one man and one woman. And although afterwards this primeval law was relaxed to some extent by God, the Supreme Legislator, there is no doubt that the law of the Gospel fully restored that original and perfect unity, and abrogated all dispensations as the words of Christ and the constant teaching and action of the Church show plainly. With reason, therefore, does the Sacred Council of Trent solemnly declare: "Christ Our Lord very clearly taught that in this bond two persons only are to be united and joined together when He said: 'Therefore they are no longer two, but one flesh.' "[21]

Nor did Christ Our Lord wish only to condemn any form of polygamy or polyandry, as they are called, whether successive or simultaneous, and every other external dishonourable act, but, in order that the sacred bounds of marriage may be guarded absolutely inviolate, He forbade also even wilful thoughts and desires of such like things: "But I say to you, that whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart."[22] Which

19St. Augustine, *De Gen. ad litt.*, lib. IX, cap. 7, n. 12.
20Cod. iur. can., c. 1013 § 7.
21Conc. Trid., Sess. XXIV.
22Matth., V, 28.

words of Christ Our Lord cannot be annulled even by the consent of one of the partners of marriage for they express a law of God and of nature which no will of man can break or bend.[23]

Nay, that mutual familiar intercourse between the spouses themselves, if the blessing of conjugal faith is to shine with becoming splendour, must be distinguished by chastity so that husband and wife bear themselves in all things with the law of God and of nature, and endeavour always to follow the will of their most wise and holy Creator with the greatest reverence towards the work of God.

This conjugal faith, however, which is most aptly called by St. Augustine the "faith of chastity" blooms more freely, more beautifully and more nobly, when it is rooted in that more excellent soil, the love of husband and wife which pervades all the duties of married life and holds pride of place in Christian marriage. For matrimonial faith demands that husband and wife be joined in an especially holy and pure love, not as adulterers love each other, but as Christ loved the Church. This precept the Apostle laid down when he said: "Husbands, love your wives as Christ also loved the Church,"[24] that Church which of a truth He embraced with a boundless love not for the sake of His own advantage, but seeking only the good of His Spouse.[25] The love, then, of which We are speaking is not that based on the passing lust of the moment nor does it consist in pleasing words only, but in the deep attachment of the heart which is expressed in action, since love is proved by deeds.[26] This outward expression of love in the home demands not only mutual help but must go further; must have as its primary purpose that man and wife help each other day by day in forming and perfecting themselves in the interior life, so that through their partnership in life they may advance ever more and more in virtue, and above all that they may grow in true love towards God and their neighbour, on which indeed "dependeth the whole Law and the Prophets."[27] For all men of every condition, in whatever honourable walk of life they may be, can and ought to imitate that most perfect example of holiness placed before man by God, namely Christ Our Lord,

23Decr. S. Officii, 2 March 1679, propos. 50.
24*Eph.*, V, 25; *Col.*, III, 19.
25*Catech. Rom.*, II, cap. VIII, q. 24.
26St. Greg. the Great, *Homil. XXX in Evang.* (John, XIV, 23-21), n. 1.
27Matth., XXII, 40.

and by God's grace to arrive at the summit of perfection, as is proved by the example set us of many saints.

By this same love it is necessary that all the other rights and duties of the marriage state be regulated as the words of the Apostle: "Let the husband render the debt to the wife, and the wife also in like manner to the husband,"[28] express not only a law of justice but of charity.

Domestic society being confirmed, therefore, by this bond of love, there should flourish in it that "order of love," as St. Augustine calls it. This order includes both the primacy of the husband with regard to the wife and children, the ready subjection of the wife and her willing obedience, which the Apostle commends in these words: "Let women be subject to their husbands as to the Lord, because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church."[29]

This subjection, however, does not deny or take away the liberty which fully belongs to the woman both in view of her dignity as a human person, and in view of her most noble office as wife and mother and companion; nor does it bid her obey her husband's every request if not in harmony with right reason or with the dignity due to wife; nor, in fine, does it imply that the wife should be put on a level with those persons who in law are called minors, to whom it is not customary to allow free exercise of their rights on account of their lack of mature judgment, or of their ignorance of human affairs. But it forbids that exaggerated liberty which cares not for the good of the family; it forbids that in this body which is the family, the heart be separated from the head to the great detriment of the whole body and the proximate danger of ruin. For if the man is the head, the woman is the heart, and as he occupies the chief place in ruling, so she may and ought to claim for herself the chief place in love.

Again, this subjection of wife to husband in its degree and manner may vary according to the different conditions of persons, place and time. In fact, if the husband neglect his duty, it falls to the wife to take his place in directing the family. But the structure of the family and its fundamental law, established and confirmed by God, must always and everywhere be maintained intact.

With great wisdom Our predecessor Leo XIII, of happy memory, in the Encyclical on Christian marriage which We have already mentioned, speaking of this order to be main-

28*I Cor.*, VII, 3. 29*Eph.*, V, 22-23.

tained between man and wife, teaches: "The man is the ruler of the family, and the head of the woman; but because she is flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone, let her be subject and obedient to the man, not as a servant but as a companion, so that nothing be lacking of honour or of dignity in the obedience which she pays. Let divine charity be the constant guide of their mutual relations, both in him who rules and in her who obeys, since each bears the image, the one of Christ, the other of the Church."[30]

These, then, are the elements which compose the blessing of conjugal faith: unity, chastity, charity, honourable noble obedience, which are at the same time an enumeration of the benefits which are bestowed on husband and wife in their married state, benefits by which the peace, the dignity and the happiness of matrimony are securely preserved and fostered. Wherefore it is not surprising that this conjugal faith has always been counted amongst the most priceless and special blessings of matrimony.

But this accumulation of benefits is completed and, as it were, crowned by that blessing of Christian marriage which in the words of St. Augustine we have called the sacrament, by which is denoted both the indissolubility of the bond and the raising and hallowing of the contract by Christ Himself, whereby He made it an efficacious sign of grace.

In the first place Christ Himself lays stress on the indissolubility and firmness of the marriage bond when He says: "What God hath joined together let no man put asunder,"[31] and: "Everyone that putteth away his wife and marrieth another committeth adultery, and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery."[32]

And St. Augustine clearly places what he calls the blessing of matrimony in this indissolubility when he says: "In the sacrament it is provided that the marriage bond should not be broken, and that a husband or wife, if separated, should not be joined to another even for the sake of offspring."[33]

And this inviolable stability, although not in the same perfect measure in every case, belongs to every true marriage, for the word of the Lord: "What God hath joined together let no man put asunder," must of necessity include all true marriages without exception, since it was spoken of the marriage of our first parents, the prototype of every future marriage. There-

30Encycl. *Arcanum divinae sapientiae,* 10 Febr. 1880. 31Matth., XIX, 6.
32Luke, XVI, 18. 33St. August., *De Gen. ad litt.,* lib. IX, cap. 7, n. 12.

fore although before Christ the sublimeness and the severity of the primeval law was so tempered that Moses permitted to the chosen people of God on account of the hardness of their hearts that a bill of divorce might be given in certain circumstances, nevertheless, Christ, by virtue of His supreme legislative power, recalled this concession of greater liberty and restored the primeval law in its integrity by those words which must never be forgotten, "What God hath joined together let no man put asunder." Wherefore, Our predecessor Pius VI of happy memory, writing to the Bishop of Agria, most wisely said: "Hence it is clear that marriage even in the state of nature, and certainly long before it was raised to the dignity of a sacrament, was divinely instituted in such a way that it should carry with it a perpetual and indissoluble bond which cannot therefore be dissolved by any civil law. Therefore although the sacramental element may be absent from a marriage as is the case among unbelievers, still in such a marriage, inasmuch as it is a true marriage there must remain and indeed there does remain that perpetual bond which by divine right is so bound up with matrimony from its first institution that it is not subject to any civil power. And so, whatever marriage is said to be contracted, either it is so contracted that it is really a true marriage, in which case it carries with it that enduring bond which by divine right is inherent in every true marriage; or it is thought to be contracted without that perpetual bond, and in that case there is no marriage, but an illicit union opposed of its very nature to the divine law, which therefore cannot be entered into or maintained."[34]

And if this stability seems to be open to exception, however rare the exception may be, as in the case of certain natural marriages between unbelievers, or amongst Christians in the case of those marriages which though valid have not been consummated, that exception does not depend on the will of men nor on that of any merely human power, but on divine law, of which the only guardian and interpreter is the Church of Christ. However, not even this power can ever affect for any cause whatsoever a Christian marriage which is valid and has been consummated, for as it is plain that here the marriage contract has its full completion, so, by the will of God, there is also the greatest firmness and indissolubility which may not be destroyed by any human authority.

If we wish with all reverence to inquire into the intimate

[34]Pius VI, *Rescript. ad Episc. Agriens.*, 11 July 1789.

reason of this divine decree, Venerable Brethren, we shall easily see it in the mystical signification of Christian marriage which is fully and perfectly verified in consummated marriage between Christians. For, as the Apostle says in his Epistle to the Ephesians,[35] the marriage of Christians recalls that most perfect union which exists between Christ and the Church: "Sacramentum hoc magnum est, ego autem dico, in Christo et in ecclesia;" which union, as long as Christ shall live and the Church through Him, can never be dissolved by any separation. And this St. Augustine clearly declares in these words: "This is safeguarded in Christ and the Church, which, living with Christ who lives for ever, may never be divorced from Him. The observance of this sacrament is such in the City of God . . . that is, in the Church of Christ, that when for the sake of begetting children, women marry or are taken to wife, it is wrong to leave a wife that is sterile in order to take another by whom children may be had. Anyone doing this is guilty of adultery, just as if he married another, guilty not by the law of the day, according to which when one's partner is put away another may be taken, which the Lord allowed in the law of Moses because of the hardness of the hearts of the people of Israel; but by the law of the Gospel."[36]

Indeed, how many and how important are the benefits which flow from the indissolubility of matrimony cannot escape anyone who gives even a brief consideration either to the good of the married parties and the offspring or to the welfare of human society. First of all, both husband and wife possess a positive guarantee of the endurance of this stability which that generous yielding of their persons and the intimate fellowship of their hearts by their nature strongly require, since true love never falls away.[37] Besides, a strong bulwark is set up in defence of a loyal chastity against incitements to infidelity, should any be encountered either from within or from without; any anxious fear lest in adversity or old age the other spouse would prove unfaithful is precluded and in its place there reigns a calm sense of security. Moreover, the dignity of both man and wife is maintained and mutual aid is most satisfactorily assured, while through the indissoluble bond, always enduring, the spouses are warned continuously that not for the sake of perishable things nor that they may serve their passions, but that they may procure one for the other high and lasting good

35 *Eph.*, V, 32.
36 St. August., *De nupt. et concup.*, lib. I, cap. 10.
37 *I Cor.*, XIII, 8.

have they entered into the nuptial partnership, to be dissolved only by death. In the training and education of children, which must extend over a period of many years, it plays a great part, since the grave and long enduring burdens of this office are best borne by the united efforts of the parents. Nor do lesser benefits accrue to human society as a whole. For experience has taught that unassailable stability in matrimony is a fruitful source of virtuous life and of habits of integrity. Where this order of things obtains, the happiness and well being of the nation is safely guarded; what the families and individuals are, so also is the State, for a body is determined by its parts. Wherefore, both for the private good of husband, wife and children, as likewise for the public good of human society, they indeed deserve well who strenuously defend the inviolable stability of matrimony.

But considering the benefits of the Sacrament, besides the firmness and indissolubility, there are also much higher emoluments as the word "sacrament" itself very aptly indicates; for to Christians this is not a meaningless and empty name. Christ the Lord, the Institutor and "Perfecter" of the holy sacraments,[38] by raising the matrimony of His faithful to the dignity of a true sacrament of the New Law, made it a sign and source of that peculiar internal grace by which "it perfects natural love, it confirms an indissoluble union, and sanctifies both man and wife."[39]

And since the valid matrimonial consent among the faithful was constituted by Christ as a sign of grace, the sacramental nature is so intimately bound up with Christian wedlock that there can be no true marriage between baptized persons "without it being by that very fact a sacrament."[40]

By the very fact, therefore, that the faithful with sincere mind give such consent, they open up for themselves a treasure of sacramental grace from which they draw supernatural power for the fulfilling of their rights and duties faithfully, holily, perseveringly even unto death. Hence this sacrament not only increases sanctifying grace, the permanent principle of the supernatural life, in those who, as the expression is, place no obstacle (*obex*) in its way, but also adds particular gifts, dispositions, seeds of grace, by elevating and perfecting the natural powers. By these gifts the parties are assisted not only in understanding, but in knowing intimately, in adhering to firmly,

38Conc. Trid., Sess. XXIV.
39Conc. Trid., Sess. XXIV.
40Cod. iur. can., c. 1012.

in willing effectively, and in successfully putting into practice, those things which pertain to the marriage state, its aims and duties, giving them in fine right to the actual assistance of grace, whensoever they need it for fulfilling the duties of their state.

Nevertheless, since it is a law of divine Providence in the supernatural order that men do not reap the full fruit of the Sacraments which they receive after acquiring the use of reason unless they cooperate with grace, the grace of matrimony will remain for the most part an unused talent hidden in the field unless the parties exercise these supernatural powers and cultivate and develop the seeds of grace they have received. If, however, doing all that lies within their power, they cooperate diligently, they will be able with ease to bear the burdens of their state and to fulfil their duties. By such a sacrament they will be strengthened, sanctified and in a manner consecrated. For, as St. Augustine teaches, just as by Baptism and Holy Orders a man is set aside and assisted either for the duties of Christian life or for the priestly office and is never deprived of their sacramental aid, almost in the same way (although not by a sacramental character), the faithful once joined by marriage ties can never be deprived of the help and the binding force of the sacrament. Indeed, as the Holy Doctor adds, even those who commit adultery carry with them that sacred yoke, although in this case not as a title to the glory of grace but for the ignominy of their guilty action, "as the soul by apostasy, withdrawing as it were from marriage with Christ, even though it may have lost its faith, does not lose the sacrament of Faith which it received at the laver of regeneration."[41]

These parties, let it be noted, not fettered but adorned by the golden bond of the sacrament, not hampered but assisted, should strive with all their might to the end that their wedlock, not only through the power and symbolism of the sacrament, but also through their spirit and manner of life, may be and remain always the living image of that most fruitful union of Christ with the Church, which is to be venerated as the sacred token of most perfect love.

All of these things, Venerable Brethren, you must consider carefully and ponder over with a lively faith if you would see in their true light the extraordinary benefits on matrimony—offspring, conjugal faith, and the sacrament. No one can fail

41St. Augustine, *De nupt. et concup.*, lib. I, cap. 10.

to admire the divine Wisdom, Holiness and Goodness which, while respecting the dignity and happiness of husband and wife, has provided so bountifully for the conservation and propagation of the human race by a single, chaste and sacred fellowship of nuptial union.

II.

When we consider the great excellence of chaste wedlock, Venerable Brethren, it appears all the more regrettable that particularly in our day we should witness this divine institution often scorned and on every side degraded.

For now, alas, not secretly nor under cover, but openly, with all sense of shame put aside, now by word again by writings, by theatrical productions of every kind, by romantic fiction, by amorous and frivolous novels, by cinematographs portraying in vivid scene, in addresses broadcast by radio telephony, in short by all the inventions of modern science, the sanctity of marriage is trampled upon and derided; divorce, adultery, all the basest vices either are extolled or at least are depicted in such colours as to appear to be free of all reproach and infamy. Books are not lacking which dare to pronounce themselves as scientific but which in truth are merely coated with a veneer of science in order that they may the more easily insinuate their ideas. The doctrines defended in these are offered for sale as the productions of modern genius, of that genius namely, which, anxious only for truth, is considered to have *emancipated* itself from all those old-fashioned and immature opinions of the ancients; and to the number of these antiquated opinions they relegate the traditional doctrine of Christian marriage.

These thoughts are instilled into men of every class, rich and poor, masters and workers, lettered and unlettered, married and single, the godly and godless, old and young, but for these last, as easiest prey, the worst snares are laid.

Not all the sponsors of these new doctrines are carried to the extremes of unbridled lust; there are those who, striving as it were to ride a middle course, believe nevertheless that something should be conceded in our times as regards certain precepts of the divine and natural law. But these likewise, more or less wittingly, are emissaries of the great enemy who is ever seeking to sow cockle among the wheat.[42] We, there-

[42] Matth., XIII, 25.

fore, whom the Father has appointed over His field, We who are bound by Our most holy office to take care lest the good seed be choked by the weeds, believe it fitting to apply to Ourselves the most grave words of the Holy Ghost with which the Apostle Paul exhorted his beloved Timothy: "Be thou vigilant . . . Fulfill thy ministry . . . Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine."[43]

And since, in order that the deceits of the enemy may be avoided, it is necessary first of all that they be laid bare; since much is to be gained by denouncing these fallacies for the sake of the unwary, even though We prefer not to name these iniquities "as becometh saints,"[44] yet for the welfare of souls We cannot remain altogether silent.

To begin at the very source of these evils, their basic principle lies in this, that matrimony is repeatedly declared to be not instituted by the Author of nature nor raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a true sacrament, but invented by man. Some confidently assert that they have found no evidence for the existence of matrimony in nature or in her laws, but regard it merely as the means of producing life and of gratifying in one way or another a vehement impulse; on the other hand, others recognize that certain beginnings or, as it were, seeds of true wedlock are found in the nature of man since, unless men were bound together by some form of permanent tie, the dignity of husband and wife or the natural end of propagating and rearing the offspring would not receive satisfactory provision. At the same time they maintain that in all beyond this germinal idea matrimony, through various concurrent causes, is invented solely by the mind of man, established solely by his will.

How grievously all these err and how shamelessly they leave the ways of honesty is already evident from what we have set forth here regarding the origin and nature of wedlock, its purposes and the good inherent in it. The evil of this teaching is plainly seen from the consequences which its advocates deduce from it, namely, that the laws, institutions and customs by which wedlock is governed, since they take their origin solely from the will of man, are subject entirely to him, hence can and must be founded, changed and abrogated according to human caprice and the shifting circumstances of human affairs; that the generative power which is grounded in nature itself is

[43] *II Tim.*, IV, 2-5. [44] *Eph.*, V, 3.

more sacred and has wider range than matrimony—hence it may be exercised both outside as well as within the confines of wedlock, and though the purpose of matrimony be set aside, as though to suggest that the license of a base fornicating woman should enjoy the same rights as the chaste motherhood of a lawfully wedded wife.

Armed with these principles, some men go so far as to concoct new species of unions, suited, as they say, to the present temper of men and the times, which various new forms of matrimony they presume to label "temporary," "experimental," and "companionate." These offer all the indulgence of matrimony and its rights without, however, the indissoluble bond, and without offspring, unless later the parties alter their cohabitation into a matrimony in the full sense of the law.

Indeed there are some who desire and insist that these practices be legitimatized by the law or, at least, excused by their general acceptance among the people. They do not seem even to suspect that these proposals partake of nothing of the modern "culture" in which they glory so much, but are simply hateful abominations which beyond all question reduce our truly cultured nations to the barbarous standards of savage peoples.

And now, Venerable Brethren, we shall explain in detail the evils opposed to each of the benefits of matrimony. First consideration is due to the offspring, which many have the boldness to call the disagreeable burden of matrimony and which they say is to be carefully avoided by married people not through virtuous continence (which Christian law permits in matrimony when both parties consent) but by frustrating the marriage act. Some justify this criminal abuse on the ground that they are weary of children and wish to gratify their desires without their consequent burden. Others say that they cannot on the one hand remain continent nor on the other can they have children because of the difficulties whether on the part of the mother or on the part of family circumstances.

But no reason, however grave, may be put forward by which anything intrinsically against nature may become conformable to nature and morally good. Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children, those who in exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural power and purpose sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious.

Small wonder, therefore, if Holy Writ bears witness that

the Divine Majesty regards with greatest detestation this horrible crime and at times has punished it with death. As St. Augustine notes, "Intercourse even with one's legitimate wife is unlawful and wicked where the conception of the offspring is prevented. Onan, the son of Juda, did this and the Lord killed him for it."[45]

Since, therefore, openly departing from the uninterrupted Christian tradition some recently have judged it possible solemnly to declare another doctrine regarding this question, the Catholic Church, to whom God has entrusted the defence of the integrity and purity of morals, standing erect in the midst of the moral ruin which surrounds her, in order that she may preserve the chastity of the nuptial union from being defiled by this foul stain, raises her voice in token of her divine ambassadorship and through Our mouth proclaims anew: any use whatsoever of matrimony exercised in such a way that the act is deliberately frustrated in its natural power to generate life is an offence against the law of God and of nature, and those who indulge in such are branded with the guilt of a grave sin.

We admonish, therefore, priests who hear confessions and others who have the care of souls, in virtue of Our supreme authority and in Our solicitude for the salvation of souls, not to allow the faithful entrusted to them to err regarding this most grave law of God; much more, that they keep themselves immune from such false opinions, in no way conniving in them. If any confessor or pastor of souls, which may God forbid, lead the faithful entrusted to him into these errors or should at least confirm them by approval or by guilty silence, let him be mindful of the fact that he must render a strict account to God, the Supreme Judge, for the betrayal of his sacred trust, and let him take to himself the words of Christ: "They are blind and leaders of the blind: and if the blind lead the blind, both fall into the pit."[46]

As regards the evil use of matrimony, to pass over the arguments which are shameful, not infrequently others that are false and exaggerated are put forward. Holy Mother Church very well understands and clearly appreciates all that is said regarding the health of the mother and the danger to her life. And who would not grieve to think of these things? Who is not filled with the greatest admiration when he sees a mother risking her life with heroic fortitude, that she may preserve

45St. Augustine, *De coniug. adult.*, lib. II, n. 12; *Gen.*, XXXVIII, 8-10.
46Matth., XV, 14.

the life of the offspring which she has conceived? God alone, all bountiful and all merciful as He is, can reward her for the fulfilment of the office allotted to her by nature, and will assuredly repay her in a measure full to overflowing.[47]

Holy Church knows well that not infrequently one of the parties is sinned against rather than sinning, when for a grave cause he or she reluctantly allows the perversion of the right order. In such a case, there is no sin, provided that, mindful of the law of charity, he or she does not neglect to seek to dissuade and to deter the partner from sin. Nor are those considered as acting against nature who in the married state use their right in the proper manner although on account of natural reasons either of time or of certain defects, new life cannot be brought forth. For in matrimony as well as in the use of the matrimonial rights there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider so long as they are subordinated to the primary end and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved.

We are deeply touched by the sufferings of those parents who, in extreme want, experience great difficulty in rearing their children.

However, they should take care lest the calamitous state of their external affairs should be the occasion for a much more calamitous error. No difficulty can arise that justifies the putting aside of the law of God which forbids all acts intrinsically evil. There is no possible circumstance in which husband and wife cannot, strengthened by the grace of God, fulfil faithfully their duties and preserve in wedlock their chastity unspotted. This truth of Christian Faith is expressed by the teaching of the Council of Trent. "Let no one be so rash as to assert that which the Fathers of the Council have placed under anathema, namely, that there are precepts of God impossible for the just to observe. God does not ask the impossible, but by His commands, instructs you to do what you are able, to pray for what you are not able that He may help you."[48]

This same doctrine was again solemnly repeated and confirmed by the Church in the condemnation of the Jansenist heresy which dared to utter this blasphemy against the goodness of God: "Some precepts of God are, when one considers the powers which man possesses, impossible of fulfilment even

47Luke, VI, 38. 48Conc. Trid., Sess. VI, cap. 11.

to the just who wish to keep the law and strive to do so; grace is lacking whereby these laws could be fulfilled."[49]

But another very grave crime is to be noted, Venerable Brethren, which regards the taking of the life of the offspring hidden in the mother's womb. Some wish it to be allowed and left to the will of the father or the mother; others say it is unlawful unless there are weighty reasons which they call by the name of medical, social, or eugenic "indication." Because this matter falls under the penal laws of the state by which the destruction of the offspring begotten but unborn is forbidden, these people demand that the "indication," which in one form or another they defend, be recognized as such by the public law and in no way penalized. There are those, moreover, who ask that the public authorities provide aid for these death-dealing operations, a thing, which, sad to say, everyone knows is of very frequent occurrence in some places.

As to the "medical and therapeutic indication" to which, using their own words, we have made reference, Venerable Brethren, however much we may pity the mother whose health and even life is gravely imperiled in the performance of the duty allotted to her by nature, nevertheless what could ever be a sufficient reason for excusing in any way the direct murder of the innocent? This is precisely what we are dealing with here. Whether inflicted upon the mother or upon the child, it is against the precept of God and the law of nature: "Thou shalt not kill:"[50] The life of each is equally sacred, and no one has the power, not even the public authority, to destroy it. It is of no use to appeal to the right of taking away life for here it is a question of the innocent, whereas that right has regard only to the guilty; nor is there here question of defense by bloodshed against an unjust aggressor (for who would call an innocent child an unjust aggressor?); again there is no question here of what is called the "law of extreme necessity" which could even extend to the direct killing of the innocent. Upright and skilful doctors strive most praiseworthily to guard and preserve the lives of both mother and child; on the contrary, those show themselves most unworthy of the noble medical profession who encompass the death of one or the other, through a pretence at practising medicine or through motives of misguided pity.

All of which agrees with the stern words of the Bishop of

[49]Const. Apost. *Cum occasione*, 31 May 1653, prop. 1.
[50]*Exod.*, XX, 13; cfr. Decr. S. Offic. 4 May 1897, 24 July 1895; 31 May 1884.

Hippo in denouncing those wicked parents who seek to remain childless, and failing in this, are not ashamed to put their offspring to death: "Sometimes this lustful cruelty or cruel lust goes so far as to seek to procure a baneful sterility, and if this fails the foetus conceived in the womb is in one way or another smothered or evacuated, in the desire to destroy the offspring before it has life, or if it already lives in the womb, to kill it before it is born. If both man and woman are party to such practices they are not spouses at all; and if from the first they have carried on thus they have come together not for honest wedlock, but for impure gratification; if both are not party to these deeds, I make bold to say that either the one makes herself a mistress of the husband, or the other simply the paramour of his wife."[51]

What is asserted in favour of the social and eugenic "indication" may and must be accepted, provided lawful and upright methods are employed within the proper limits; but to wish to put forward reasons based upon them for the killing of the innocent is unthinkable and contrary to the divine precept promulgated in the words of the Apostle: Evil is not to be done that good may come of it.[52]

Those who hold the reins of government should not forget that it is the duty of public authority by appropriate laws and sanctions to defend the lives of the innocent, and this all the more so since those whose lives are endangered and assailed cannot defend themselves. Among whom we must mention in the first place infants hidden in the mother's womb. And if the public magistrates not only do not defend them, but by their laws and ordinances betray them to death at the hands of doctors or of others, let them remember that God is the Judge and Avenger of innocent blood which cries from earth to Heaven.[53]

Finally, that pernicious practice must be condemned which closely touches upon the natural right of man to enter matrimony but affects also in a real way the welfare of the offspring. For there are some who over solicitous for the cause of eugenics, not only give salutary counsel for more certainly procuring the strength and health of the future child—which, indeed, is not contrary to right reason—but put eugenics before aims of a higher order, and by public authority wish to prevent from marrying all those whom, even though naturally fit

51St. Augustine, *De nupt. et concupisc.*, cap. XV. 52*Rom.*, III, 8.
53*Gen.*, IV, 10.

for marriage, they consider, according to the norms and conjectures of their investigations, would, through hereditary transmission, bring forth defective offspring. And more, they wish to legislate to deprive these of that natural faculty by medical action despite their unwillingness; and this they do not propose as an infliction of grave punishment under the authority of the state for a crime committed, nor to prevent future crimes by guilty persons, but against every right and good they wish the civil authority to arrogate to itself a power over a faculty which it never had and can never legitimately possess.

Those who act in this way are at fault in losing sight of the fact that the family is more sacred than the State and that men are begotten not for the earth and for time, but for Heaven and eternity. Although often these individuals are to be dissuaded from entering into matrimony, certainly it is wrong to brand men with the stigma of crime because they contract marriage, on the ground that, despite the fact that they are in every respect capable of matrimony, they will give birth only to defective children, even though they use all care and diligence.

Public magistrates have no direct power over the bodies of their subjects; therefore, where no crime has taken place and there is no cause present for grave punishment, they can never directly harm, or tamper with the integrity of the body, either for the reasons of eugenics or for any other reason. St. Thomas teaches this when, inquiring whether human judges for the sake of preventing future evils can inflict punishment, he admits that the power indeed exists as regards certain other forms of evil, but justly and properly denies it as regards the maiming of the body. "No one who is guiltless may be punished by a human tribunal either by flogging to death, or mutilation, or by beating."[54]

Furthermore, Christian doctrine establishes, and the light of human reason makes it most clear, that private individuals have no other power over the members of their bodies than that which pertains to their natural ends; and they are not free to destroy or mutilate their members, or in any other way render themselves unfit for their natural functions, except when no other provision can be made for the good of the whole body.

[54] *Summ. theol.*, 2a 2ae, q. 108 a 4 ad 2um.

We may now consider another class of errors concerning conjugal faith. Every sin committed as regards the offspring becomes in some way a sin against conjugal faith, since both these blessings are essentially connected. However, we must mention briefly the sources of error and vice corresponding to those virtues which are demanded by conjugal faith, namely the chaste honour existing between man and wife, the due subjection of wife to husband, and the true love which binds both parties together.

It follows therefore that they are destroying mutual fidelity, who think that the ideas and morality of our present time concerning a certain harmful and false friendship with a third party can be countenanced, and who teach that a greater freedom of feeling and action in such external relations should be allowed to man and wife, particularly as many (so they consider) are possessed of an inborn sexual tendency which cannot be satisfied within the narrow limits of monogamous marriage. That rigid attitude which condemns all sensual affections and actions with a third party they imagine to be a narrowing of mind and heart, something obsolete, or an abject form of jealousy, and as a result they look upon whatever penal laws are passed by the State for the preserving of conjugal faith as void or to be abolished. Such unworthy and idle opinions are condemned by that noble instinct which is found in every chaste husband and wife, and even by the light of the testimony of nature alone,—a testimony that is sanctioned and confirmed by the command of God: "Thou shalt not commit adultery,"[55] and the words of Christ: "Whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart."[56] The force of this divine precept can never be weakened by any merely human custom, bad example or pretext of human progress, for just as it is the one and the same "Jesus Christ, yesterday and to-day and the same for ever,"[57] so it is the one and the same doctrine of Christ that abides and of which not one jot or tittle shall pass away till all is fulfilled.[58]

The same false teachers who try to dim the lustre of conjugal faith and purity do not scruple to do away with the honourable and trusting obedience which the woman owes to the man. Many of them even go further and assert that such a subjection of one party to the other is unworthy of human

55*Exod.*, XX, 14. 56MATTH., V, 28. 57*Hebr.*, XIII, 8.
58MATTH., V, 18.

dignity, that the rights of husband and wife are equal; wherefore, they boldly proclaim, the emancipation of women has been or ought to be effected. This emancipation in their ideas must be threefold, in the ruling of the domestic society, in the administration of family affairs and in the rearing of the children. It must be social, economic, physiological:—physiological, that is to say, the woman is to be freed at her own good pleasure from the burdensome duties properly belonging to a wife as companion and mother (We have already said that this is not an emancipation but a crime); social, inasmuch as the wife being freed from the cares of children and family, should, to the neglect of these, be able to follow her own bent and devote herself to business and even public affairs; finally economic, whereby the woman even without the knowledge and against the wish of her husband may be at liberty to conduct and administer her own affairs, giving her attention chiefly to these rather than to children, husband and family.

This, however, is not the true emancipation of woman, nor that rational and exalted liberty which belongs to the noble office of a Christian woman and wife; it is rather the debasing of the womanly character and the dignity of motherhood, and indeed of the whole family, as a result of which the husband suffers the loss of his wife, the children of their mother, and the home and the whole family of an ever watchful guardian. More than this, this false liberty and unnatural equality with the husband is to the detriment of the woman herself, for if the woman descends from her truly regal throne to which she has been raised within the walls of the home by means of the Gospel, she will soon be reduced to the old state of slavery (if not in appearance, certainly in reality) and become as amongst the pagans the mere instrument of man.

This equality of rights which is so much exaggerated and distorted, must indeed be recognised in those rights which belong to the dignity of the human soul and which are proper to the marriage contract and inseparably bound up with wedlock. In such things undoubtedly both parties enjoy the same rights and are bound by the same obligations; in other things there must be a certain inequality and due accommodation, which is demanded by the good of the family and the right ordering and unity and stability of home life.

As, however, the social and economic conditions of the married woman must in some way be altered on account of the

changes in social intercourse, it is part of the office of the public authority to adapt the civil rights of the wife to modern needs and requirements, keeping in view what the natural disposition and temperament of the female sex, good morality, and the welfare of the family demands, and provided always that the essential order of the domestic society remain intact, founded as it is on something higher than human authority and wisdom, namely on the authority and wisdom of God, and so not changeable by public laws or at the pleasure of private individuals.

These enemies of marriage go further, however, when they substitute for that true and solid love, which is the basis of conjugal happiness, a certain vague compatibility of temperament. This they call sympathy and assert that, since it is the only bond by which husband and wife are linked together, when it ceases the marriage is completely dissolved. What else is this than to build a house upon sand?—a house that in the words of Christ would forthwith be shaken and collapse, as soon as it was exposed to the waves of adversity "and the winds blew and they beat upon that house. And it fell: and great was the fall thereof."[59] On the other hand, the house built upon a rock, that is to say on mutual conjugal chastity and strengthened by a deliberate and constant union of spirit, will not only never fall away but will never be shaken by adversity.

We have so far, Venerable Brethren, shown the excellency of the first two blessings of christian wedlock which the modern subverters of society are attacking. And now considering that the third blessing, which is that of the sacrament, far surpasses the other two, we should not be surprised to find that this, because of its outstanding excellence, is much more sharply attacked by the same people. They put forward in the first place that matrimony belongs entirely to the profane and purely civil sphere, that it is not to be committed to the religious society, the Church of Christ, but to civil society alone. They then add that the marriage contract is to be freed from any indissoluble bond, and that separation and divorce are not only to be tolerated but sanctioned by the law; from which it follows finally that, robbed of all its holiness, matrimony should be enumerated amongst the secular and civil institutions. The first point is contained in their

59MATTH., VII, 27.

contention that the civil act itself should stand for the marriage contract (civil matrimony, as it is called), while the religious act is to be considered a mere addition, or at most a concession to a too superstitious people. Moreover they want it to be no cause for reproach that marriages be contracted by Catholics with non-Catholics without any reference to religion or recourse to the ecclesiastical authorities. The second point, which is but a consequence of the first is to be found in their excuse for complete divorce and in their praise and encouragement of those civil laws which favour the loosening of the bond itself. As the salient features of the religious character of all marriage and particularly of the sacramental marriage of Christians have been treated at length and supported by weighty arguments in the encyclical letters of Leo XIII, letters which We have frequently recalled to mind and expressly made our own, We refer you to them, repeating here only a few points.

Even by the light of reason alone and particularly if the ancient records of history are investigated, if the unwavering popular conscience is interrogated and the manners and institutions of all races examined, it is sufficiently obvious that there is a certain sacredness and religious character attaching even to the purely natural union of man and woman, "not something added by chance but innate, not imposed by men but involved in the nature of things," since it has "God for its author and has been even from the beginning a foreshadowing of the Incarnation of the Word of God."[60] This sacredness of marriage which is intimately connected with religion and all that is holy, arises from the divine origin we have just mentioned, from its purpose which is the begetting and educating of children for God, and the binding of man and wife to God through Christian love and mutual support; and finally it arises from the very nature of wedlock, whose institution is to be sought for in the farseeing Providence of God, whereby it is the means of transmitting life, thus making the parents the ministers, as it were, of the Divine Omnipotence. To this must be added that new element of dignity which comes from the sacrament, by which the Christian marriage is so ennobled and raised to such a level, that it appeared to the Apostle as a great sacrament, honourable in every way.[61]

This religious character of marriage, its sublime signifi-

60Leo XIII, Encycl. *Arcanum*, 10 Febr. 1880.
61*Eph.*, V, 32: *Hebr.*, XIII, 4.

cation of grace and the union between Christ and the Church, evidently requires that those about to marry should show a holy reverence towards it, and zealously endeavour to make their marriage approach as nearly as possible to the archetype of Christ and the Church.

They, therefore, who rashly and heedlessly contract mixed marriages, from which the maternal love and providence of the Church dissuades her children for very sound reasons, fail conspicuously in this respect, sometimes with danger to their eternal salvation. This attitude of the Church to mixed marriages appears in many of her documents, all of which are summed up in the Code of Canon Law: "Everywhere and with the greatest strictness the Church forbids marriages between baptized persons, one of whom is a Catholic and the other a member of a schismatical or heretical sect; and if there is, add to this, the danger of the falling away of the Catholic party and the perversion of the children, such a marriage is forbidden also by the divine law."[62] If the Church occasionally on account of circumstances does not refuse to grant a dispensation from these strict laws (provided that the divine law remains intact and the dangers above mentioned are provided against by suitable safeguards), it is unlikely that the Catholic party will not suffer some detriment from such a marriage.

Whence it comes about not unfrequently, as experience shows, that deplorable defections from religion occur among the offspring, or at least a headlong descent into that religious indifference which is closely allied to impiety. There is this also to be considered that in these mixed marriages it becomes much more difficult to imitate by a lively conformity of spirit the mystery of which We have spoken, namely that close union between Christ and His Church.

Assuredly, also, will there be wanting that close union of spirit which as it is the sign and mark of the Church of Christ, so also should be the sign of Christian wedlock, its glory and adornment. For, where there exists diversity of mind, truth and feeling, the bond of union of mind and heart is wont to be broken, or at least weakened. From this comes the danger lest the love of man and wife grow cold and the peace and happiness of family life, resting as it does on the union of hearts, be destroyed. Many centuries ago indeed, the old Roman law had proclaimed: "Marriages are the union

62Cod. iur. can., c. 1060.

of male and female, a sharing of life and the communication of divine and human rights."[63] But especially, as We have pointed out, Venerable Brethren, the daily increasing facility of divorce is an obstacle to the restoration of marriage to that state of perfection which the divine Redeemer willed it should possess.

The advocates of the neo-paganism of to-day have learned nothing from the sad state of affairs, but instead, day by day, more and more vehemently, they continue by legislation to attack the indissolubility of the marriage bond, proclaiming that the lawfulness of divorce must be recognised, and that the antiquated laws should give place to a new and more humane legislation. Many and varied are the grounds put forward for divorce, some arising from the wickedness and the guilt of the persons concerned, others arising from the circumstances of the case; the former they describe as subjective, the latter as objective; in a word, whatever might make married life hard or unpleasant. They strive to prove their contentions regarding these grounds for the divorce legislation they would bring about, by various arguments. Thus, in the first place, they maintain that it is for the good of either party that the one who is innocent should have the right to separate from the guilty, or that the guilty should be withdrawn from a union which is unpleasing to him and against his will. In the second place, they argue, the good of the child demands this, for either it will be deprived of a proper education or the natural fruits of it, and will too easily be affected by the discords and shortcomings of the parents, and drawn from the path of virtue. And thirdly the common good of society requires that these marriages should be completely dissolved, which are now incapable of producing their natural results, and that legal reparations should be allowed when crimes are to be feared as the result of the common habitation and intercourse of the parties. This last, they say must be admitted to avoid the crimes being committed purposely with a view to obtaining the desired sentence of divorce for which the judge can legally loose the marriage bond, as also to prevent people from coming before the courts when it is obvious from the state of the case that they are lying and perjuring themselves,—all of which brings the court and the lawful authority into contempt. Hence the civil laws, in their opinion, have to be reformed to meet these new requirements,

[63] MODESTINUS, in Dig. (Lib. XXIII, II: *De ritu nuptiarum*), lib. I, Regularum.

to suit the changes of the times and the changes in men's opinions, civil institutions and customs. Each of these reasons is considered by them as conclusive, so that all taken together offer a clear proof of the necessity of granting divorce in certain cases.

Others, taking a step further, simply state that marriage, being a private contract, is, like other private contracts, to be left to the consent and good pleasure of both parties, and so can be dissolved for any reason whatsoever.

Opposed to all these reckless opinions, Venerable Brethren, stands the unalterable law of God, fully confirmed by Christ, a law that can never be deprived of its force by the decrees of men, the ideas of a people or the will of any legislator: "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."[64] And if any man, acting contrary to this law, shall have put asunder, his action is null and void, and the consequence remains, as Christ Himself has explicitly confirmed: "Everyone that putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery."[65] Moreover, these words refer to every kind of marriage, even that which is natural and legitimate only; for, as has already been observed, that indissolubility by which the loosening of the bond is once and for all removed from the whim of the parties and from every secular power, is a property of every true marriage.

Let that solemn pronouncement of the Council of Trent be recalled to mind in which, under the stigma of anathema, it condemned these errors: "If anyone should say that on account of heresy or the hardships of co-habitation or a deliberate abuse of one party by the other the marriage tie may be loosened, let him be anathema;"[66] and again: "If anyone should say that the Church errs in having taught or in teaching that, according to the teaching of the Gospel and the Apostles, the bond of marriage cannot be loosed because of the sin of adultery of either party; or that neither party, even though he be innocent, having given no cause for the sin of adultery, can contract another marriage during the lifetime of the other; and that he commits adultery who marries another after putting away his adulterous wife, and likewise that she commits adultery who puts away her husband and marries another: let him be anathema."[67]

64MATTH., XIX, 6. 65LUKE, XVI, 18. 66Conc. Trid., Sess. XXIV, cap. 5.
67Conc. Trid., Sess. XXIV, cap. 7.

If therefore the Church has not erred and does not err in teaching this, and consequently it is certain that the bond of marriage cannot be loosed even on account of the sin of adultery, it is evident that all the other weaker excuses that can be, and are usually brought forward, are of no value whatsoever. And the objections brought against the firmness of the marriage bond are easily answered. For, in certain circumstances, imperfect separation of the parties is allowed, the bond not being severed. This separation, which the Church herself permits, and expressly mentions in her Canon Law in those canons which deal with the separation of the parties as to marital relationship and co-habitation, removes all the alleged inconveniences and dangers.[68] It will be for the sacred law and, to some extent, also the civil law, in so far as civil matters are affected, to lay down the grounds, the conditions, the method and precautions to be taken in a case of this kind in order to safeguard the education of the children and the well-being of the family, and to remove all those evils which threaten the married persons, the children and the State. Now all those arguments that are brought forward to prove the indissolubility of the marriage tie, arguments which have already been touched upon, can equally be applied to excluding not only the necessity of divorce, but even the power to grant it; while for all the advantages that can be put forward for the former, there can be adduced as many disadvantages and evils which are a formidable menace to the whole of human society.

To revert again to the expressions of Our predecessor, it is hardly necessary to point out what an amount of good is involved in the absolute indissoubility of wedlock and what a train of evils follows upon divorce. Whenever the marriage bond remains intact, then we find marriages contracted with a sense of safety and security, while, when separations are considered and the dangers of divorce are present, the marriage contract itself becomes insecure, or at least gives ground for anxiety and surprises. On the one hand we see a wonderful strengthening of goodwill and cooperation in the daily life of husband and wife, while, on the other, both of these are miserably weakened by the presence of a facility for divorce. Here we have at a very opportune moment a source of help by which both parties are enabled to preserve their purity and loyalty; there we find harmful inducements to unfaithfulness. On this side we find the birth of children and their tuition and up-

[68]Cod. iur. can., c. 1128 sqq.

bringing effectively promoted, many avenues of discord closed amongst families and relations, and the beginnings of rivalry and jealously easily suppressed; on that, very great obstacles to the birth and rearing of children and their education, and many occasions of quarrels, and seeds of jealousy sown everywhere. Finally, but especially, the dignity and position of women in civil and domestic society is reinstated by the former; while by the latter it is shamefully lowered and the danger is incurred "of their being considered outcasts, slaves of the lust of men."[69]

To conclude with the important words of Leo XIII, since the destruction of family life "and the loss of national wealth is brought about more by the corruption of morals than by anything else, it is easily seen that divorce, which is born of the perverted morals of a people, and leads, as experiment shows, to vicious habits in public and private life, is particularly opposed to the well-being of the family and of the State. The serious nature of these evils will be the more clearly recognised, when we remember that, once divorce has been allowed, there will be no sufficient means of keeping it in check within any definite bounds. Great is the force of example, greater still that of lust; and with such incitements it cannot but happen that divorce and its consequent setting loose of the passions should spread daily and attack the souls of many like a contagious disease or a river bursting its banks and flooding the land."[70]

Thus, as we read in the same letter, "unless things change, the human family and State have every reason to fear lest they should suffer absolute ruin."[71] All this was written fifty years ago, yet it is confirmed by the daily increasing corruption of morals and the unheard of degradation of the family in those lands where Communism reigns unchecked.

III.

Thus far, Venerable Brethren, We have admired with due reverence what the all wise Creator and Redeemer of the human race has ordained with regard to human marriage; at the same time we have expressed Our grief that such a pious ordinance of the divine Goodness should to-day, and on every

69Leo XIII, Encycl. *Arcanum divinae sapientiae,* 10 Febr. 1880.
70Encycl. *Arcanum,* 10 Febr. 1880. 71Encycl. *Arcanum,* 10 Febr. 1880.

side, be frustrated and trampled upon by the passions, errors and vices of men.

It is then fitting that, with all fatherly solicitude, We should turn Our mind to seek out suitable remedies whereby those most detestable abuses which We have mentioned, may be removed, and everywhere marriage may again be revealed. To this end, it behooves Us, above all else, to call to mind that firmly established principle, esteemed alike in sound philosophy and sacred theology: namely, that whatever things have deviated from their right order, cannot be brought back to that original state which is in harmony with their nature except by a return to the divine plan which, as the Angelic Doctor teaches,[72] is the exemplar of all right order.

Wherefore, Our predecessor of happy memory, Leo XIII, attacked the doctrine of the naturalists in these words: "It is a divinely appointed law that whatsoever things are constituted by God, the Author of nature, these we find the more useful and salutary, the more they remain in their natural state, unimpaired and unchanged; inasmuch as God, the Creator of all things, intimately knows what is suited to the constitution and the preservation of each, and by his will and mind has so ordained all things that each may duly achieve its purpose. But if the boldness and wickedness of men change and disturb this order of things, so providentially disposed, then, indeed, things so wonderfully ordained, will begin to be injurious, or will cease to be beneficial, either because, in the change, they have lost their power to benefit, or because God Himself is thus pleased to draw down chastisement on the pride and presumption of men."[73]

In order, therefore, to restore due order in this matter of marriage, it is necessary that all should bear in mind what is the divine plan and strive to conform to it.

Wherefore, since the chief obstacle to this study is the power of unbridled lust, which indeed is the most potent cause of sinning against the sacred laws of matrimony, and since man cannot hold in check his passions, unless he first subject himself to God, this must be his primary endeavour, in accordance with the plan divinely ordained. For it is a sacred ordinance that whoever shall have first subjected himself to God will, by the aid of divine grace, be glad to subject to himself his own passions and concupiscence; while he who is a rebel

72St. Thom. of Aquin, Summ. theolog., 1a 2ae, q. 91, a. 1-2.
73Encycl. *Arcanum divinae sapientiae,* 10 Febr. 1880.

against God will, to his sorrow, experience within himself the violent rebellion of his worst passions.

And how wisely this has been decreed, St. Augustine thus shows: "This indeed is fitting, that the lower be subject to the higher, so that he who would have subject to himself whatever is below him, should himself submit to whatever is above him. Acknowledge order, seek peace. Be thou subject to God, and thy flesh subject to thee. What more fitting! What more fair! Thou art subject to the higher and the lower is subject to thee. Do thou serve Him who made thee, so that that which was made for thee may serve thee. For we do not commend this order, namely, 'The flesh to thee and thou to God,' but 'Thou to God, and the flesh to thee.' If, however, thou despisest the subjection of thyself to God, thou shalt never bring about the subjection of the flesh to thyself. If thou dost not obey the Lord, thou shalt be tormented by thy servant."[74] This right ordering on the part of God's wisdom is mentioned by the holy Doctor of the Gentiles, inspired by the Holy Ghost, for in speaking of those ancient philosophers who refused to adore and reverence Him whom they knew to be the Creator of the universe, he says: "Wherefore God gave them up to the desires of their heart, unto uncleanness, to dishonour their own bodies among themselves;" and again: "For this same God delivered them up to shameful affections."[75] And St. James says: "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble,"[76] without which grace, as the same Doctor of the Gentiles reminds us, man cannot subdue the rebellion of his flesh.[77]

Consequently, as the onslaughts of these uncontrolled passions cannot in any way be lessened, unless the spirit first shows a humble compliance of duty and reverence towards its Maker, it is above all and before all needful that those who are joined in the bond of sacred wedlock should be wholly imbued with a profound and genuine sense of duty towards God, which will shape their whole lives, and fill their minds and wills with a very deep reverence for the majesty of God.

Quite fittingly, therefore, and quite in accordance with the defined norm of Christian sentiment, do those pastors of souls act who, to prevent married people from failing in the observance of God's law, urge them to perform their duty and exer-

74St. August., *Enarrat. in Ps. 143.*
75*Rom.*, I, 24, 26.
76James IV, 6.
77*Rom.*, VII, VIII.

cise their religion so that they should give themselves to God, continually ask for His divine assistance, frequent the sacraments, and always nourish and preserve a loyal and thoroughly sincere devotion to God.

They are greatly deceived who having underestimated or neglected these means which rise above nature, think that they can induce men by the use and discovery of the natural sciences, such as those of biology, the science of heredity, and the like, to curb their carnal desires. We do not say this in order to belittle those natural means which are not dishonest; for God is the Author of nature as well as of grace, and He has disposed the good things of both orders for the beneficial use of men. The faithful, therefore, can and ought to be assisted also by natural means. But they are mistaken who think that these means are able to establish chastity in the nuptial union, or that they are more effective than supernatural grace.

This conformity of wedlock and moral conduct with the divine laws respective of marriage, without which its effective restoration cannot be brought about, supposes, however, that all can discern readily, with real certainty, and without any accompanying error, what those laws are. But everyone can see to how many fallacies an avenue would be opened up and how many errors would become mixed with the truth, if it were left solely to the light of reason of each to find it out, or if it were to be discovered by the private interpretation of the truth which is revealed. And if this is applicable to many other truths of the moral order, we must all the more pay attention to those things, which appertain to marriage where the inordinate desire for pleasure can attack frail human nature and easily deceive it and lead it astray; this is all the more true of the observance of the divine law, which demands sometimes hard and repeated sacrifices, for which, as experience points out, a weak man can find so many excuses for avoiding the fulfilment of the divine law.

On this account, in order that no falsification or corruption of the divine law but a true genuine knowledge of it may enlighten the minds of men and guide their conduct, it is necessary that a filial and humble obedience towards the Church should be combined with devotedness to God and the desire of submitting to Him. For Christ Himself made the Church the teacher of truth in those things also which concern the right regulation of moral conduct, even though some knowl-

edge of the same is not beyond human reason. For just as God, in the case of the natural truths of religion and morals, added revelation to the light of reason so that what is right and true, "in the present state also of the human race may be known readily with real certainty without any admixture of error,"[78] so for the same purpose he has constituted the Church the guardian and the teacher of the whole of the truth concerning religion and moral conduct; to her therefore should the faithful show obedience and subject their minds and hearts so as to be kept unharmed and free from error and moral corruption, and so that they shall not deprive themselves of that assistance given by God with such liberal bounty, they ought to show this due obedience not only when the Church defines something with solemn judgment, but also, in proper proportion, when by the constitutions and decrees of the Holy See, opinions are prescribed and condemned as dangerous or distorted.[79]

Wherefore, let the faithful also be on their guard against the overrated independence of private judgment and that false autonomy of human reason. For it is quite foreign to everyone bearing the name of a Christian to trust his own mental powers with such pride as to agree only with those things which he can examine from their inner nature, and to imagine that the Church, sent by God to teach and guide all nations, is not conversant with present affairs and circumstances; or even that they must obey only in those matters which she has decreed by solemn definition as though her other decisions might be presumed to be false or putting forward insufficient motive for truth and honesty. Quite to the contrary, a characteristic of all true followers of Christ, lettered or unlettered, is to suffer themselves to be guided and led in all things that touch upon faith or morals by the Holy Church of God through its Supreme Pastor the Roman Pontiff, who is himself guided by Jesus Christ Our Lord.

Consequently, since everything must be referred to the law and mind of God, in order to bring about the universal and permanent restoration of marriage, it is indeed of the utmost importance that the faithful should be well instructed concerning matrimony; both by word of mouth and by the written word, not cursorily but often and fully, by means of plain and weighty arguments, so that these truths will strike

78Conc. Vat., Sess. III, cap. 2.
79Conc. Vat., Sess. III, cap. 4; Cod. iur. can., c. 1324.

the intellect and will be deeply engraved on their hearts. Let them realize and diligently reflect upon the great wisdom, kindness and bounty God has shown towards the human race, not only by the institution of marriage, but also, and quite as much, by upholding it with sacred laws; still more, in wonderfully raising it to the dignity of a Sacrament by which such an abundant fountain of graces has been opened to those joined in Christian wedlock, that these may be able to serve the noble purposes of wedlock for their own welfare and for that of their children, of the community and also for that of human relationship.

Certainly, if the latter day subverters of marriage are entirely devoted to misleading the minds of men and corrupting their hearts, to making a mockery of matrimonial purity and extolling the filthiest of vices by means of books and pamphlets and other innumerable methods, much more ought you, Venerable Brethren, whom "the Holy Ghost has placed as bishops, to rule the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood,"[80] to give yourselves wholly to this, that through yourselves and through the priests subject to you, and, moreover, through the laity welded together by Catholic Action, so much desired and recommended by Us, into a power of hierarchical apostolate, you may, by every fitting means, oppose error by truth, vice by the excellent dignity of chastity, the slavery of covetousness by the liberty of the sons of God,[81] that disastrous ease in obtaining divorce by an enduring love in the bond of marriage and by the inviolate pledge of fidelity given even to death.

Thus will it come to pass that the faithful will wholeheartedly thank God that they are bound together by His command and led by gentle compulsion to fly as far as possible from every kind of idolatry of the flesh and from the base slavery of the passions. They will, in a great measure, turn and be turned away from these abominable opinions which to the dishonour of man's dignity are now spread about in speech and in writing and collected under the title of "perfect marriage" and which indeed would make that perfect marriage nothing better than "depraved marriage," as it has been rightly and truly called.

Such wholesome instruction and religious training in regard to Christian marriage will be quite different from that exaggerated physiological education by means of which, in

[80] *Acta*, XX, 28.

[81] JOHN, VIII, 32 sqq.; *Gal.*, V, 13.

these times of ours, some reformers of married life make pretence of helping those joined in wedlock, laying much stress on these physiological matters, in which is learned rather the art of sinning in a subtle way than the virtue of living chastely.

So, Venerable Brethren, we make entirely Our own the words which Our predecessor of happy memory, Leo XIII, in his encyclical letter on Christian marriage addressed to the bishops of the whole world: "Take care not to spare your efforts and authority in bringing about that among the people committed to your guidance that doctrine may be preserved whole and unadulterated which Christ the Lord and the apostles, the interpreters of the divine will, have handed down, and which the Catholic Church herself has religiously preserved, and commanded to be observed by the faithful of every age."[82]

Even the very best instruction given by the Church, however, will not alone suffice to bring about once more conformity of marriage to the law of God; something more is needed in addition to the education of the mind, namely a steadfast determination of the will, on the part of husband and wife, to observe the sacred laws of God and of nature in regard to marriage. In fine, in spite of what others may wish to assert and spread abroad by word of mouth or in writing, let husband and wife resolve: to stand fast to the commandments of God in all things that matrimony demands; always to render to each other the assistance of mutual love; to preserve the honour of chastity; not to lay profane hands on the stable nature of the bond; to use the rights given them by marriage in a way that will be always Christian and sacred, more especially in the first years of wedlock, so that should there be need of continency afterwards, custom will have made it easier for each to preserve it. In order that they may make this firm resolution, keep it and put it into practice, an oft-repeated consideration of their state of life, and a diligent reflection on the sacrament they have received, will be of great assistance to them. Let them constantly keep in mind, that they have been sanctified and strengthened for the duties and for the dignity of their state by a special sacrament, the efficacious power of which, although it does not impress a character, is undying. To this purpose we may ponder over the words full of real comfort of holy Cardinal Robert Bellarmine, who with other well-known theologians with devout conviction thus expresses himself: "The sacrament of matrimony

82Encycl. *Arcanum*. 10 Febr. 1880.

can be regarded in two ways: first, in the making, and then in its permanent state. For it is a sacrament like to that of the Eucharist, which not only when it is being conferred, but also whilst it remains, is a sacrament; for as long as the married parties are alive, so long is their union a sacrament of Christ and the Church."[83]

Yet in order that the grace of this sacrament may produce its full fruit, there is need, as we have already pointed out, of the cooperation of the married parties; which consists in their striving to fulfil their duties to the best of their ability and with unwearied effort. For just as in the natural order men must apply the powers given them by God with their own toil and diligence that these may exercise their full vigor, failing which, no profit is gained, so also men must diligently and unceasingly use the powers given them by the grace which is laid up in the soul by this sacrament. Let not, then, those who are joined in matrimony neglect the grace of the sacrament which is in them;[84] for, in applying themselves to the careful observance, however laborious, of their duties they will find the power of that grace becoming more effectual as time goes on. And if ever they should feel themselves to be overburdened by the hardships of their condition of life, let them not lose courage, but rather let them regard in some measure as addressed to them that which St. Paul the Apostle wrote to his beloved disciple Timothy regarding the sacrament of holy Orders when the disciple was dejected through hardship and insults: "I admonish thee that thou stir up the grace which is in thee by the imposition of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of sobriety."[85]

All these things, however, Venerable Brethren, depend in large measure on the due preparation remote and proximate, of the parties for marriage. For it cannot be denied that the basis of a happy wedlock, and the ruin of an unhappy one, is prepared and set in the souls of boys and girls during the period of childhood and adolescence. There is danger that those who before marriage sought in all things what is theirs, who indulged even their impure desires, will be in the married state what they were before, that they will reap that which they have sown;[86] indeed, within the home there will be sadness, lamentation, mutual contempt, strifes, estrangements,

83St. Rob. Bellarmin., *De controversiis*, tom. III, *De Matr.*, controvers. II, cap. 6.
84*I Tim.*, IV, 14. 85*II Tim.*, I. 6-7. 86*Gal.*, VI. 9.

weariness of common life, and, worst of all, such parties will find themselves left alone with their own unconquered passions.

Let then, those who are about to enter on married life, approach that state well disposed and well prepared, so that they will be able, as far as they can, to help each other in sustaining the vicissitudes of life, and yet more in attending to their eternal salvation and in forming the inner man unto the fulness of the age of Christ.[87] It will also help them, if they behave towards their cherished offspring as God wills: that is, that the father be truly a father, and the mother truly a mother; through their devout love and unwearying care, the home, though it suffer the want and hardship of this valley of tears, may become for the children in its own way a foretaste of that paradise of delight in which the Creator placed the first men of the human race. Thus will they be able to bring up their children as perfect men and perfect Christians; they will instill into them a sound understanding of the Catholic Church, and will give them such a disposition and love for their fatherland as duty and gratitude demand.

Consequently, both those who are now thinking of entering upon this sacred married state, as well as those who have the charge of educating Christian youth, should, with due regard to the future, prepare that which is good, obviate that which is bad, and recall those points about which We have already spoken in Our encyclical letter concerning education: "The inclinations of the will, if they are bad, must be repressed from childhood, but such as are good must be fostered, and the mind, particularly of children, should be imbued with doctrines which begin with God, while the heart should be strengthened with the aids of divine grace, in the absence of which, no one can curb evil desires, nor can his discipline and formation be brought to complete perfection by the Church. For Christ has provided her with heavenly doctrines and divine sacraments, that He might make her an effectual teacher of men."[88]

To the proximate preparation of a good married life belongs very specially the care in choosing a partner; on that depends a great deal whether the forthcoming marriage will be happy or not, since one may be to the other either a great help in leading a Christian life, or, a great danger and hindrance. And so that they may not deplore for the rest of

[87] *Eph.*, IV, 13. [88] Encycl. *Divini illius Magistri*, 31 Dec. 1929.

their lives the sorrows arising from an indiscreet marriage, those about to enter into wedlock should carefully deliberate in choosing the person with whom henceforward they must live continually: they should, in so deliberating, keep before their minds the thought first of God and of the true religion of Christ, then of themselves, of their partner, of the children to come, as also of human and civil society, for which wedlock is a fountain head. Let them diligently pray for divine help, so that they make their choice in accordance with Christian prudence, not indeed led by the blind and unrestrained impulse of lust, nor by any desire of riches or other base influence, but by a true and noble love and by a sincere affection for the future partner; and then let them strive in their married life for those ends for which the State was constituted by God. Lastly, let them not omit to ask the prudent advice of their parents with regard to the partner, and let them regard this advice in no light manner, in order that by their mature knowledge and experience of human affairs they may guard against a disastrous choice, and, on the threshold of matrimony, may receive more abundantly the divine blessing of the fourth commandment: "Honour thy father and thy mother (which is the first commandment with a promise) that it may be well with thee and thou mayest be long-lived upon the earth."[89]

Now since it is no rare thing to find that the perfect observance of God's commands and conjugal integrity encounter difficulties by reason of the fact that the man and wife are in straitened circumstances, their necessities must be relieved as far as possible.

And so, in the first place, every effort must be made to bring about that which Our predecessor Leo XIII, of happy memory, has already insisted upon,[90] namely, that in the State such economic and social methods should be adopted as will enable every head of a family to earn as much as, according to his station in life, is necessary for himself, his wife, and for the rearing of his children, for "the labourer is worthy of his hire."[91] To deny this, or to make light of what is equitable, is a grave injustice and is placed among the greatest sins by Holy Writ;[92] nor is it lawful to fix such a scanty wage as will be insufficient for the upkeep of the family in the circumstances in which it is placed.

89*Eph.*, VI, 2-3; *Exod.*, XX, 12. 90Encycl. *Rerum novarum*, 15 May 1891.
91Luke, X, 7. 92*Deut.* XXIV, 14, 15.

Care, however, must be taken that the parties themselves, for a considerable time before entering upon married life, should strive to dispose of, or at least to diminish, the material obstacles in their way. The manner in which this may be done effectively and honestly must be pointed out by those who are experienced. Provision must be made also, in the case of those who are not self-supporting, for joint aid by private or public guilds.[93]

When these means which We have pointed out do not fulfil the needs, particularly of a larger or poorer family, Christian charity towards our neighbour absolutely demands that those things which are lacking to the needy should be provided; hence it is incumbent on the rich to help the poor, so that, having an abundance of this world's goods, they may not expend them fruitlessly or completely squander them, but employ them for the support and well-being of those who lack the necessities of life. They who give of their substance to Christ in the person of His poor will receive from the Lord a most bountiful reward when He shall come to judge the world; they who act to the contrary will pay the penalty.[94] Not in vain does the Apostle warn us: "He that hath the substance of this world and shall see his brother in need, and shall shut up his bowels from him: how doth the charity of God abide in him?"[95]

If, however, for this purpose, private resources do not suffice, it is the duty of the public authority to supply for the insufficient forces of individual effort, particularly in a matter which is of such importance to the common weal, touching as it does the maintenance of the family and married people. If families, particularly those in which there are many children, have not suitable dwellings; if the husband cannot find employment and means of livelihood; if the necessities of life cannot be purchased except at exorbitant prices; if even the mother of the family to the great harm of the home, is compelled to go forth and seek a living by her own labour; if she, too, in the ordinary or even extraordinary labours of childbirth, is deprived of proper food, medicine, and the assistance of a skilled physician, it is patent to all to what an extent married people may lose heart, and how home life and the observance of God's commands are rendered difficult for them;

93Leo XIII, Encycl. *Rerum novarum*, 15 May 1891.
94Matth., XXV, 34 sqq. 95*I John*, III, 17.

indeed it is obvious how great a peril can arise to the public security and to the welfare and very life of civil society itself when such men are reduced to that condition of desperation that, having nothing which they fear to lose, they are emboldened to hope for chance advantage from the upheaval of the state and of established order.

Wherefore, those who have the care of the State and of the public good cannot neglect the needs of married people and their families, without bringing great harm upon the State and on the common welfare. Hence, in making the laws and in disposing of public funds they must do their utmost to relieve the needs of the poor, considering such a task as one of the most important of their administrative duties.

We are sorry to note that not infrequently nowadays it happens that through a certain inversion of the true order of things, ready and bountiful assistance is provided for the unmarried mother and her illegitimate offspring (who, of course must be helped in order to avoid a greater evil) which is denied to legitimate mothers or given sparingly or almost grudgingly.

But not only in regard to temporal goods, Venerable Brethren, is it the concern of the public authority to make proper provision for matrimony and the family, but also in other things which concern the good of souls. Just laws must be made for the protection of chastity, for reciprocal conjugal aid, and for similar purposes, and these must be faithfully enforced, because, as history testifies, the prosperity of the State and the temporal happiness of its citizens cannot remain safe and sound where the foundation on which they are established, which is the moral order, is weakened and where the very fountainhead from which the State draws its life, namely, wedlock and the family, is obstructed by the vices of its citizens.

For the preservation of the moral order neither the laws and sanctions of the temporal power are sufficient, nor is the beauty of virtue and the expounding of its necessity. Religious authority must enter in to enlighten the mind, to direct the will, and to strengthen human frailty by the assistance of divine grace. Such an authority is found nowhere save in the Church instituted by Christ the Lord. Hence We earnestly exhort in the Lord all those who hold the reins of power that they establish and maintain firmly harmony and friendship

with this Church of Christ so that through the united activity and energy of both powers the tremendous evils, fruits of those wanton liberties which assail both marriage and the family and are a menace to both Church and State, may be effectively frustrated.

Governments can assist the Church greatly in the execution of its important office, if, in laying down their ordinances, they take account of what is prescribed by divine and ecclesiastical law, and if penalties are fixed for offenders. For as it is, there are those who think that whatever is permitted by the laws of the State, or at least is not punished by them, is allowed also in the moral order, and, because they neither fear God nor see any reason to fear the laws of man, they act even against their conscience, thus often bringing ruin upon themselves and upon many others. There will be no peril to or lessening of the rights and integrity of the State from its association with the Church. Such suspicion and fear is empty and groundless, as Leo XIII has already so clearly set forth: "It is generally agreed," he says, "that the Founder of the Church, Jesus Christ, wished the spiritual power to be distinct from the civil, and each to be free and unhampered in doing its own work, not forgetting, however, that it is expedient to both, and in the interest of everybody, that there be a harmonious relationship . . . If the civil power combines in a friendly manner with the spiritual power of the Church, it necessarily follows that both parties will greatly benefit. The dignity of the State will be enhanced, and with religion as its guide, there will never be a rule that is not just; while for the Church there will be at hand a safeguard and defence which will operate to the public good of the faithful."[96]

To bring forward a recent and clear example of what is meant, it has happened quite in consonance with right order and entirely according to the law of Christ, that in the solemn Convention happily entered into between the Holy See and the Kingdom of Italy, also in matrimonial affairs a peaceful settlement and friendly cooperation has been obtained, such as befitted the glorious history of the Italian people and its ancient and sacred traditions. These decrees, are to be found in the Lateran Pact: "The Italian State, desirous of restoring to the institution of matrimony, which is the basis of the family, that dignity conformable to the traditions of its people, assigns as civil effects of the sacrament of matrimony all that is attributed

[96]Encycl. *Arcanum divinae sapientiae,* 10 Febr. 1880.

to it in Canon Law."[97] To this fundamental norm are added further clauses in the common pact.

This might well be a striking example to all of how, even in this our own day (in which, sad to say, the absolute separation of the civil power from the Church, and indeed from every religion, is so often taught), the one supreme authority can be united and associated with the other without detriment to the rights and supreme power of either thus protecting Christian parents from pernicious evils and menacing ruin.

All these things which, Venerable Brethren, prompted by Our past solicitude We put before you, We wish according to the norm of Christian prudence to be promulgated widely among all Our beloved children committed to your care as members of the great family of Christ, that all may be thoroughly acquainted with sound teaching concerning marriage, so that they may be ever on their guard against the dangers advocated by the teachers of error, and most of all, that "denying ungodliness and worldly desires, they may live soberly and justly, and godly in this world, looking for the blessed hope and coming of the glory of the great God and Our Saviour Jesus Christ."[98]

May the Father, "of whom all paternity in heaven and earth is named,"[99] Who strengthens the weak and gives courage to the pusillanimous and fainthearted; and Christ Our Lord and Redeemer, "the Institutor and Perfecter of the holy sacraments,"[100] Who desired marriage to be and made it the mystical image of His own ineffable union with the Church; and the Holy Ghost, Love of God, the Light of hearts and the Strength of the mind, grant that all will perceive, will admit with a ready will, and by the grace of God will put into practice, what We by this letter have expounded concerning the holy Sacrament of Matrimony, the wonderful law and will of God respecting it, the errors and impending dangers, and the remedies with which they can be counteracted, so that that fruitfulness dedicated to God will flourish again vigorously in Christian wedlock.

We most humbly pour forth Our earnest prayer at the Throne of His Grace, that God, the Author of all graces, the inspirer of all good desires and deeds,[101] may bring this about, and deign to give it bountifully according to the greatness of

97Concord., art. 34; *Act. Apost. Sed.*, XXI (1929), pag. 290.
98*Tit.*, II, 12-13.
99*Eph.*, III, 15.
100Conc Trid., Sess. XXIV.
101*Phil.*, II, 13.

His liberality and omnipotence, and as a token of the abundant blessing of the same Omnipotent God, We most lovingly grant to you, Venerable Brethren, and to the clergy and people committed to your watchful care, the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome, in Saint Peter's, this 31st day of December, of the year 1930, the ninth of Our Pontificate.

PIUS PP. XI.

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FORTY YEARS AFTER

RECONSTRUCTING THE SOCIAL ORDER

ENCYCLICAL LETTER OF
HIS HOLINESS, POPE PIUS XI

TENTH PRINTING

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ENCYCLICAL LETTER

OF HIS HOLINESS

PIUS XI

BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE

POPE

TO OUR VENERABLE BRETHREN: THE PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS AND OTHER ORDINARIES, IN PEACE AND COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE, AND TO ALL THE FAITHFUL OF THE CATHOLIC WORLD ON RECONSTRUCTING THE SOCIAL ORDER AND PERFECTING IT CONFORMABLY TO THE PRECEPTS OF THE GOSPEL, IN COMMEMORATION OF THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENCYCLICAL "RERUM NOVARUM."

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ENCYCLICAL

OF

POPE PIUS XI

FORTY YEARS AFTER

Reconstructing the Social Order

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ENCYCLICAL LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS PIUS XI

BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE

POPE

To Our Venerable Brethren: The Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops and Other Ordinaries, in Peace and Communion With the Apostolic See, and to All the Faithful of the Catholic World on Reconstructing the Social Order and Perfecting It Conformably to the Precepts of the Gospel, in Commemoration of the Fortieth Anniversary of the Encyclical "Rerum Novarum."

VENERABLE BRETHREN AND BELOVED CHILDREN

HEALTH AND APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION

FORTY years have elapsed since the incomparable Encyclical of Leo XIII of happy memory, *Rerum Novarum*, first saw the light. The whole Catholic world gratefully recalls the event, and prepares to celebrate it with befitting solemnity.

The way for this remarkable document of pastoral solicitude, it is true, had been in a measure prepared by other pronouncements of Our Predecessor. His letters on The Foundation of Human Society, The Family and the Holy Sacrament of Matrimony;[1] On The Origin of Civil Power;[2] and its proper coordination with the Church;[3] on the Chief Duties of Christian Citizens,[4] Against the Tenets of Socialism;[5] and the False Notions of Human Liberty;[6] these and others of the kind had unmistakably revealed the mind of Leo XIII. *Rerum Novarum*, however, stood

1Encycl. *Arcanum*, February 10, 1880. 2Encycl. *Diuturnum*, June 29, 1881.
3Encycl. *Immortale Dei*, November 1, 1885.
4Encycl. *Sapientiae Christianae*, January 10, 1890.
5Encycl. *Quod Apostolici Muneris*, December 28, 1878.
6Encycl. *Libertas*, June 20, 1888.

out in this, that it laid down for all mankind unerring rules for the right solution of the difficult problem of human solidarity, called the social question, at the very time when such guidance was most opportune and necessary.

Occasion

Towards the close of the Nineteenth Century the new economic methods and the new development of industry had sprung into being in almost all civilized nations, and had made such headway that human society appeared more and more divided into two classes. The first, small in numbers, enjoyed practically all the comforts so plentifully supplied by modern invention. The second class, comprising the immense multitude of workingmen, was made up of those who, oppressed by dire poverty, struggled in vain to escape from the straits which encompassed them.

This state of things was quite satisfactory to the wealthy, who looked upon it as the consequence of inevitable and natural economic laws, and who, therefore, were content to abandon to charity alone the full care of relieving the unfortunate, as though it were the task of charity to make amends for the open violation of justice, a violation not merely tolerated, but sanctioned at times by legislators. On the other hand, the working classes, victims of these harsh conditions, submitted to them with extreme reluctance, and became more and more unwilling to bear the galling yoke. Some, carried away by the heat of evil counsels, went so far as to seek the disruption of the whole social fabric. Others, whom a solid Christian training restrained from such misguided excesses, convinced themselves nevertheless that there was much in all this that needed a radical and speedy reform.

Such also was the opinion of many Catholics, priests and laymen, who with admirable charity had long devoted themselves to relieving the undeserved misery of the laboring classes, and who could not persuade themselves that so radical and unjust a distinction in the distribution of temporal goods was quite in harmony with the designs of an all-wise Creator.

They therefore sought in all sincerity a remedy against the lamentable disorder already existing in society, and a firm barrier against worse dangers to come. But such is the infirmity of even the best minds, that these men either found themselves repelled as dangerous innovators or opposed by fellow-workers in the same cause, who held views different from theirs, and thus wavering in uncertainty, they did not, under the circumstances, know which way to turn.

In this grave conflict of opinions, accompanied by discussions not always of a peaceful nature, the eyes of all, as often in the past, turned towards the Chair of Peter, that sacred depository of all truth whence words of salvation are dispensed to the whole world. To the feet of Christ's Vicar on earth were seen to flock, in unprecedented numbers, sociological students, employers, the very workingmen themselves, begging with one voice that at last a safe road might be pointed out to them. Long did the prudent Pontiff consider the matter before God, seeking the advice of the most experienced counsellors available, and carefully weighing the reasons for and against. At last, "urged by the responsibility of the apostolic office"[7] and lest by keeping silence he should seem to neglect his duty,[8] he decided in virtue of the divine *Magisterium* committed to him to address himself to the Universal Church of Christ, nay, to the whole human race. On May 15, 1891, therefore, the long-desired message was given to the world. Undaunted by the difficulty of the undertaking or by the weight of years, with unbending courage, the venerable Pontiff taught mankind new methods of approach to social problems.

You know, Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children, you know full well the admirable teaching which has made the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* forever memorable. In this document the Supreme Shepherd, grieving for "the misery and wretchedness pressing unjustly" on such a large proportion of mankind, boldly took in his own hands the cause of workingmen, "surrendered, isolated and helpless, to the hard-heartedness of employers and the greed of unchecked competition."[9] He sought help neither from Liberalism nor Socialism. The former had already shown its utter impotence to find a right solution of the social question, while the latter would have exposed human society to still graver dangers by offering a remedy much more disastrous than the evil it designed to cure. The Sovereign Pontiff approached the subject in the exercise of his manifest rights, deeply conscious that he was the chief guardian of religion and the chief dispenser of all that closely appertains to it, for the question at issue was one to which "no solution could be found apart from the intervention of religion and of the Church."[10] Basing his doctrine solely upon the unchangeable principles drawn from right reason and divine revelation, he indicated and proclaimed with confidence and "as one having power,"[11] "the relative rights and mutual duties of the rich and of the poor, of capital and of labor,"[12] and at the same time

7Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 1.
8Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 13.
9Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 13.
10Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 20.
11Matt. vii. 29.
12Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 1.

the part that was to be taken by the Church, by the state and by the persons immediately concerned.

Nor was the Apostolic voice raised in vain. It was listened to with genuine admiration and greeted with profound sympathy not only by the loyal children of the Church, but by many also who had wandered far from the truth and from the unity of faith; nay more, by well nigh every one who, either as private student or as legislator, was thereafter interested in social and economic questions. With particular enthusiasm was the Pontifical Letter welcomed by Christian workingmen, who felt themselves vindicated and defended by the highest authority on earth, and by all those devoted men whose concern it had long been to better the conditions of labor, and who heretofore had found nothing but general indifference, not to say unfriendly suspicion, or even open hostility. All these men have ever deservedly held the Encyclical in the highest esteem, to the extent of solemnizing its memory in various ways year after year throughout the world in token of gratitude.

Despite this widespread agreement, however, some minds were not a little disturbed, with the result that the noble and exalted teaching of Leo XIII, quite novel to worldly ears, was looked upon with suspicion by some, even amongst Catholics, and gave offense to others. For it boldly attacked and overthrew the idols of Liberalism, swept aside inveterate prejudices, and was so far and so unexpectedly in advance of its time, that the slow of heart ridiculed the study of the new social philosophy, and the timid feared to scale its lofty heights. Nor were there wanting those who, while professing their admiration for this message of light, regarded it as a Utopian ideal, desirable rather than attainable in practice.

The Scope of the Present Encyclical

And now that the solemn commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum* is being enthusiastically celebrated in every country, but particularly in the Holy City, to which Catholic workingmen are gathering from all sides, We deem it opportune, Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children, first, to recall the great benefits which this Encyclical has brought to the Catholic Church and to the world at large; secondly, to vindicate the social and economic doctrine of so great a master against certain doubts which have arisen, and to develop more fully some of its points; finally, after arraigning modern economics and examining the nature of Socialism, to expose the root of the present social disorder, and to point out the only salutary cure, a reform of

Christian morals. Such are the three topics to the treatment of which the present Letter is dedicated.

Benefits Due to Encyclical

Beginning, then, with the topic We have mentioned first, We cannot refrain from paying to Almighty God the tribute of Our earnest gratitude for the benefits which have come from the Encyclical of Leo XIII. For We remember the counsel of St. Ambrose: "No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks."[13] Were We to enumerate these benefits even in a cursory way, it would be necessary to recall almost the whole social history of the past forty years. We may summarize them conveniently under three heads, corresponding to the three forms of intervention for which Our Predecessor pleaded in order to bring about his great work of reconstruction.

What Was Done by the Church

In the first place, Leo himself clearly stated what could be expected from the Church. "The Church insists, on the authority of the Gospel, upon those teachings whereby the conflict can be brought to an end, or rendered, at least, far less bitter. The Church uses her efforts not only to enlighten the mind, but to direct by her precepts the life and conduct of each and all. The Church improves and betters the condition of the workingman by means of numerous organizations."[14]

In Doctrinal Matters

This mighty power for good the Church did not suffer to remain unprofitably stored away, but drew upon it freely in the cause of a peace that was so universally desired. Time and again the social and economic doctrine of the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* was proclaimed and emphasized in spoken and written word by Leo XIII himself and by his successors, who were ever careful to adapt it to the changing conditions of the times, and who never relaxed their paternal solicitude and pastoral constancy, particularly in defense of the poor and of the weak.[15] With like zeal and erudition did numerous Bishops of the Catholic world in-

13St. Ambrose, on the Passing of His Brother Satyrus, Book 1, Capt. 44.

14Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Page 9.

15Leo XIII, *Litt. Apost. Praeclara*, June 20, 1894; Encycl. *Graves De Communi*, January 18, 1901; Pius X, *Motu Proprio De Actione Populari Christiana*, December 8, 1903; Benedict XV, Encycl. *Ad. Beatissimi*, November 1, 1914; Pius XI, Encycl. *Ubi Arcano*, December 23, 1922; Encycl. *Rite Expiatis*, April 30, 1926

terpret and comment upon this doctrine, and apply it, according to the mind and instructions of the Holy See, to the special circumstances of the various nations.[16]

It is not surprising, therefore, that under the teaching and guidance of the Church, many learned priests and laymen earnestly devoted themselves to the problem of elaborating social and economic science in accordance with the conditions of our age, for the chief purpose of adapting to modern needs the unchanging and unchangeable doctrine of the Church.

Under the guidance and in the light of Leo's Encyclical was thus evolved a truly Christian social science, which continues to be fostered and enriched daily by the tireless labors of those picked men whom We have named the auxiliaries of the Church. They do not allow it to remain hidden in learned obscurity, but bring it forth into the full view of public life, as is clearly shown by the valuable and well-frequented courses founded in Catholic universities, academies and seminaries, by social congresses and "weeks" held at frequent intervals and with gratifying success, by study circles, by sound and timely publications spread far and wide.

Nor were these the only blessings which followed from the Encyclical. The doctrine of *Rerum Novarum* began little by little to penetrate among those also who, being outside Catholic unity, do not recognize the authority of the Church; and thus Catholic principles of sociology gradually became part of the intellectual heritage of the whole human race. Thus, too, We rejoice that the Catholic truths, proclaimed so vigorously by Our illustrious Predecessor, are advanced and advocated not merely in non-Catholic books and journals, but frequently also in legislative assemblies and in courts of justice.

Moreover, when after the great war the rulers of the leading nations wished to restore peace by an entire reform of social conditions, and among other measures drew up principles to regulate the just rights of labor, many of their conclusions agreed so perfectly with the principles and warnings of Leo XIII as to seem expressly deduced from them. The Encyclical *(Rerum Novarum)* has become in truth a memorable document to which may well be applied the words of Isaias, "A standard set up unto the nations."[17]

[16]Cf. *La Hierarchie Catholique et le Probleme Social Depuis L'Encyclique Rerum Novarum,* 1891-1931, pp. xvi, 335; *Union Internationale Etudes Sociale Fondee a Malines, en 1920, Sous La Presidence du Card. Mercier,* Paris, "*Editions* Spes," 1931.

[17]Isaias xi. 12.

In Practical Application

In the meantime, study and investigation caused Pope Leo's teaching to become widely known throughout the world, and steps were taken to apply it to practical use. In the first place in a spirit of active beneficence, every effort was made to lift up a class of men, who, owing to the expansion of modern industry, had enormously increased in numbers, but whose rightful position in society had not yet been determined, and who in consequence were the objects of much neglect and contempt.

These were the workingmen. In addition, therefore, to their other heavy pastoral duties, the secular and regular clergy, under the guidance of the Bishops began at once the work of popular education and culture to the immense advantage of souls.

This constant endeavor to imbue the minds of the workingmen with the Christian spirit did much to awaken in them at the same time a sense of their true dignity. By keeping clearly before their mind the rights and duties of their position, it rendered them capable of legitimate genuine progress, and of becoming leaders of their fellows.

From that time onward, the resources of life were provided for in larger measure and more securely. In answer to the appeal of the Pontiff, works of beneficence and charity began to multiply. Under the direction of the Church, and frequently under the guidance of her priests, there sprang up further an ever increasing number of new institutions, by which workingmen, craftsmen, husbandmen, wage-earners of every class could give and receive mutual assistance and support.

What Was Done by Civil Authority

With regard to the civil power, Leo XIII boldly passed beyond the restrictions imposed by Liberalism, and fearlessly proclaimed the doctrine that the civil power is more than the mere guardian of law and order, and that it must strive with all zeal "to make sure that the laws and institutions, the general character and administration of the commonwealth, should be such as of themselves to realize public well-being and private prosperity."[18] It is true, indeed, that a just freedom of action should be left to individual citizens and families; but this principle is only valid as long as the common good is secure and no injustice is entailed. The duty of rulers is to protect the community and its various elements; and in protecting the rights of individuals they must have special regard for the infirm and needy. "For the richer class have many ways

18Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 26.

of shielding themselves and stand less in need of help from the State, whereas the mass of the poor have no resources of their own to fall back upon and must chiefly depend upon the assistance of the State. And for this reason wage-earners, since they mostly belong to that class, should be especially cared for and protected by the government."[19]

We do not, of course, deny that even before the Encyclical of Leo, some rulers had provided for the more urgent needs of the working classes, and had checked the more flagrant acts of injustice perpetrated against them. But after the Apostolic Voice had sounded from the Chair of Peter throughout the world, the leaders of the nations became at last more fully conscious of their obligations, and set to work seriously to promote a broader social policy.

In fact, the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* completely overthrew those tottering tenets of Liberalism which had long hampered effective interference by the government. It prevailed upon the peoples themselves to develop their social policy more intensely and on truer lines, and encouraged the élite among Catholics to give such efficacious help and assistance to rulers of the state that in legislative assemblies they were not infrequently the foremost advocates of the new policy. Furthermore, not a few recent laws dealing with social questions were originally proposed to the suffrages of the people's representatives by ecclesiastics thoroughly imbued with Leo's teaching, who afterwards with watchful care promoted and fostered their execution.

As a result of these steady and tireless efforts, there has arisen a new branch of jurisprudence unknown to earlier times, whose aim is the energetic defense of those sacred rights of the workingman which proceed from his dignity as a man and as a Christian. These laws concern the soul, the health, the strength, the housing, workshops, wages, dangerous employments, in a word, all that concerns the wage-earners, with particular regard to women and children. Even though these regulations do not agree always and in every detail with the recommendations of Pope Leo, it is none the less certain that much which they contain is strongly suggestive of *Rerum Novarum,* to which in large measure must be attributed the improved condition of the workingmen.

What Was Done by the Parties Concerned

"In the last place," the wise Pontiff pointed out, "employers and workmen may of themselves effect much in the matter We are treating by means of such organizations as afford opportune aid to

[19]Encycl. *Rerum Novarum,* Par 29

those who are in distress and which draw the two classes more closely together."[20] Among these He attributed prime importance to societies consisting either of workingmen alone, or of workingmen and employers together. He devotes much space to describing and commending these societies and expounds with remarkable prudence their nature, reason and opportunities, their rights, duties and laws.

The lesson was well timed. For at that period rulers of not a few nations were deeply infected with Liberalism and regarded such unions of workingmen with disfavor, if not with open hostility. While readily recognizing and patronizing similar corporations amongst other classes, with criminal injustice they denied the innate right of forming associations to those who needed them most for self-protection against oppression by the more powerful. There were even Catholics who viewed with suspicion the efforts of the laboring classes to form such unions, as if they reflected the spirit of Socialistic or revolutionary agitators.

Workingmen's Unions

Worthy of all praise, therefore, are the directions authoritatively promulgated by Leo XIII, which served to break down this opposition and dispel these suspicions. They have a still higher distinction, however, that of encouraging Christian workingmen to form unions according to their several trades, and of teaching them how to do it. Many were thus confirmed in the path of duty, in spite of the vehement attractions of Socialist organizations, which claimed to be the sole defenders and champions of the lowly and the oppressed.

The Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* declared most appropriately that "these workingmen's associations should be so organized and governed as to furnish the best and most suitable means for attaining what is aimed at, that is to say, for helping each member to better his condition to the utmost in body, soul and property;" yet that it is clear "that they must pay special and chief attention to the duties of religion and morality, and that social betterment should have this chiefly in view." For "the foundation of social laws being thus laid in religion, it is not hard to establish the relations of members one to another, in order that they may live together in concord and achieve prosperity."[21]

Eager to carry out to the full the program of Leo XIII, the clergy and many of the laity devoted themselves everywhere with

20Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*. Par. 36. 21Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*. Par. 42. 43

admirable zeal to the creation of such unions, which in turn became instrumental in building up a body of truly Christian workingmen. These happily combined the successful plying of their trade with deep religious convictions; they learned to defend their temporal rights and interests energetically and efficiently, retaining at the same time a due respect for justice and a sincere desire to collaborate with other classes. Thus they prepared the way for a Christian renewal of the whole social life. These counsels of Leo XIII were reduced to practice differently in different places. In some countries one and the same association included within its scope all the ends and purposes proposed by him. In others, according as circumstances seemed to counsel or demand, a division of function developed, and various associations were founded. Of these some undertook the protection of the rights and legitimate interests of their members in the hiring of their labor; others had as their object the provision of mutual help in economic matters; while others, still, were exclusively concerned with religious and moral duties of a similar kind. The latter method was chiefly used wherever the laws of the country, or peculiar economic conditions, or the lamentable dissension of minds and hearts so prevalent in modern society, or the necessity of uniting forces to combat the growing ranks of revolutionaries, made it impossible for Catholics to form Catholic unions. Under such circumstances, they seem to have no choice but to enroll themselves in neutral trade unions. These, however, should always respect justice and equity, and leave to their Catholic members full freedom to follow the dictates of their conscience and to obey the precepts of the Church. It belongs to the Bishops to permit Catholic workingmen to join these unions, where they judge that circumstances render it necessary and there appears no danger for religion, observing however the rules and precautions recommended by Our Predecessor of saintly memory, Pius X.[22]

Among these precautions the first and most important is that, side by side with these trade unions, there must always be associations which aim at giving their members a thorough religious and moral training, that these in turn may impart to the labor unions to which they belong the upright spirit which should direct their entire conduct. Thus will these unions exert a beneficent influence far beyond the ranks of their own members.

It must be set to the credit of the Encyclical that these unions of workingmen have everywhere so flourished, that in our days, though unfortunately still inferior in number to the organizations

22Encycl. *Singulari Quadam*, September 24, 1912

of Socialists and Communists, they already muster an imposing body of wage-earners able to maintain successfully, both in national and international assemblies, the rights and legitimate demands of Catholic laborers, and to assert the saving principles on which Christian society is based.

Organizations Among Other Classes

There is the further fact that the doctrine concerning the innate right of forming unions, which Leo XIII treated so learnedly and defended so bravely, began to find ready application to corporations other than those of workingmen. It would seem, therefore, that the Encyclical is in no small measure responsible for the gratifying increase and spread of associations amongst farmers and others of the humbler classes. These excellent organizations, with others of a similar kind, happily combine economic advantages with mental culture.

Associations of Employers

Associations of employers and captains of industry, which Our Predecessor so earnestly pleaded for, did not meet with the same success; they are, we regret to say, still few in number. The reason for this must not be entirely attributed to want of good will, but to other and far more serious obstacles, whose nature and gravity We well know and appreciate to the full. There are, however, well founded hopes that these obstacles also will shortly be removed. We hail even now with deep joy of soul certain experiments, far from negligible, which have been made in this regard, and which have already produced much fruit and give much promise for the future.[23]

"Rerum Novarum" Magna Charta of Social Order

These beneficent results of Leo's Encyclical, Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children, which We have here suggested rather than described, are so many and so great as to prove beyond question that this immortal document exhibits more than a beautiful, but merely imaginary picture of human society.

We would rather say that Our illustrious Predecessor drew from the Gospel as from a living and life-giving source doctrines capable, if not of settling at once, at least of considerably mitigating the fatal internal strife which rends the human family. That the good seed sown with a lavish hand forty years ago fell in part on good ground is shown by the rich harvest which by God's favor the Church of Christ and the whole human race have reaped unto

[23]See Letter of the S. Congregation of the Council to the Bishop of Lille, June 5, 1929.

salvation. It would not be rash to say that during the long years of its usefulness Leo's Encyclical has proved itself the Magna Charta on which all Christian activities in social matters are ultimately based.

Nevertheless, there are some who seem to attach little importance to this Encyclical and to the present anniversary celebration. These men either slander a doctrine of which they are entirely ignorant, or if not unacquainted with this teaching, they betray their failure to understand it, or else if they understand it they lay themselves open to the charge of base injustice and ingratitude.

In the course of these years, however, doubts have arisen concerning the correct interpretation of certain passages of the Encyclical or their inferences, and these doubts have led to controversies even among Catholics, not always of a peaceful character. On the other hand, the new needs of our age and the changed conditions of society have rendered necessary a more precise application and amplification of Leo's doctrine. We, therefore, gladly seize this opportunity of answering these doubts, so far as in Us lies, and of satisfying the demands of the present day. This We do in virtue of Our Apostolic office by which We are a debtor to all.[24]

The Authority of the Church in Social and Economic Spheres

But before proceeding to discuss these problems We lay down the principle long since clearly established by Leo XIII that it is Our right and Our duty to deal authoritatively with social and economic problems.[25] It is not of course the office of the Church to lead men to transient and perishable happiness only, but to that which is eternal. Indeed "the Church believes that it would be wrong for her to interfere without just cause in such earthly concerns;"[26] but she never can relinquish her God-given task of interposing her authority, not indeed in technical matters, for which she has neither the equipment nor the mission, but in all those that have a bearing on moral conduct. For the deposit of truth entrusted to Us by God, and Our weighty office of propagating, interpreting and urging in season and out of season the entire moral law, demand that both social and economic questions be brought within Our supreme jurisdiction, in so far as they refer to moral issues.

For, though economic science and moral discipline are guided each by its own principles in its own sphere, it is false that the two orders are so distinct and alien that the former in no way depends

[24]Rom. i. 14.

[25]Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 13.

[26]Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 13.

on the latter. The so-called laws of economics, derived from the nature of earthly goods and from the qualities of the human body and soul, determine what aims are unattainable or attainable in economic matters and what means are thereby necessary, while reason itself clearly deduces from the nature of things and from the individual and social character of man, what is the end and object of the whole economic order assigned by God the Creator.

For it is the moral law alone which commands us to seek in all our conduct our supreme and final end, and to strive directly in our specific actions for those ends which nature, or rather, the Author of Nature, has established for them, duly subordinating the particular to the general. If this law be faithfully obeyed, the result will be that particular economic aims, whether of society as a body or of individuals, will be intimately linked with the universal teleological order, and as a consequence we shall be led by progressive stages to the final end of all, God Himself, our highest and lasting good.

The Right of Property

Descending now to details, We commence with ownership, or the right of property. You are aware, Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children, how strenuously Our Predecessor of happy memory defended the right of property against the teachings of the Socialists of His time, showing that the abolition of private ownership would prove to be not beneficial, but grievously harmful to the working classes. Yet, since there are some who falsely and unjustly accuse the Supreme Pontiff and the Church as upholding, both then and now, the wealthier classes against the proletariat, and since controversy has arisen among Catholics as to the true sense of Pope Leo's teaching, We have thought it well to defend from calumny the Leonine doctrine in this matter, which is also the Catholic doctrine, and to safeguard it against false interpretations.

Its Individual and Social Character

First, let it be made clear beyond all doubt that neither Leo XIII, nor those theologians who have taught under the guidance and direction of the Church, have ever denied or called in question the two-fold aspect of ownership, which is individual or social accordingly as it regards individuals or concerns the common good. Their unanimous contention has always been that the right to own private property has been given to man by nature or rather by the Creator Himself, not only in order that individuals may be able to provide for their own needs and those of their

families, but also that by means of it, the goods which the Creator has destined for the human race may truly serve this purpose. Now these ends cannot be secured unless some definite and stable order is maintained.

There is, therefore, a double danger to be avoided. On the one hand, if the social and public aspect of ownership be denied or minimized, the logical consequence is "Individualism," as it is called; on the other hand, the rejection or diminution of its private and individual character necessarily leads to some form of "Collectivism." To disregard these dangers would be to rush headlong into the quicksands of Modernism in the moral, juridical and social order, which We condemned in the Encyclical Letter issued at the beginning of Our Pontificate.[27]

Let this be noted particularly by those seekers after novelties who launch against the Church the odious calumny that she has allowed a pagan concept of ownership to creep into the teachings of her theologians and that another concept must be substituted, which in their astounding ignorance they call Christian.

The Obligations of Ownership

That we may keep within bounds the controversies which have arisen concerning ownership and the duties attaching to it, We reassert in the first place the fundamental principle laid down by Leo XIII, that the right of property must be distinguished from its use.[28] It belongs to what is called commutative justice faithfully to respect the possessions of others, not encroaching on the rights of another and thus exceeding one's rights of ownership. The putting of one's own possessions to proper use, however, does not fall under this form of justice, but under certain other virtues, and therefore it is "a duty not enforced by courts of justice."[29] Hence it is idle to contend that the right of ownership and its proper use are bounded by the same limits; and it is even less true that the very misuse or even the non-use of ownership destroys or forfeits the right itself.

Most helpful therefore and worthy of all praise are the efforts of those who, in a spirit of harmony and with due regard for the traditions of the Church, seek to determine the precise nature of these duties and to define the boundaries imposed by the requirements of social life upon the right of ownership itself or upon its use. On the contrary, it is a grievous error so to weaken the individual character of ownership as actually to destroy it.

27Encycl. *Ubi Arcano,* December 23, 1922. 28Encycl. *Rerum Novarum,* Par. 19.
29Encycl. *Rerum Novarum,* Par. 19.

The Power of the State

It follows from the two-fold character of ownership, which We have termed individual and social, that men must take into account in this matter not only their own advantage but also the common good. To define in detail these duties, when the need occurs and when the natural law does not do so, is the function of the government. Provided that the natural and divine law be observed, the public authority, in view of the common good, may specify more accurately what is licit and what is illicit for property owners in the use of their possessions. Moreover, Leo XIII had wisely taught that "the defining of private possession has been left by God to man's own industry and to the laws of individual peoples."[30]

History proves that the right of ownership, like other elements of social life, is not absolutely rigid, and this doctrine We ourselves have given utterance to on a previous occasion in the following terms: "How varied are the forms which the right of property has assumed! First, the primitive form used amongst rude and savage peoples, which still exists in certain localities even in our own day; then, that of the patriarchal age; later came various tyrannical types, (We use the word in its classical meaning); finally, the feudal and monarchic systems down to the varieties of more recent times."[31]

"It is plain, however, that the state may not discharge this duty in an arbitrary manner. Man's natural right of possessing and transmitting property by inheritance must remain intact and cannot be taken away by the State from man."[32] "For man precedes the State and the domestic household is antecedent, as well in idea as in fact, to the gathering of men into a community."[33]

Hence the prudent Pontiff had already declared it unlawful for the State to exhaust the means of individuals by crushing taxes and tributes. "The right to possess private property is derived from nature, not from man; and the State has by no means the right to abolish it, but only to control its use and bring it into harmony with the interests of the public good."[34]

However, when civil authority adjusts ownership to meet the needs of the public good it acts not as an enemy, but as the friend of private owners; for thus it effectively prevents the possessions of private property, intended by Nature's Author in His Wisdom for the sustaining of human life, from creating intolerable burdens

30Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 7. 31Allocution to the A. C. I., May 16, 1926
32Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 6. 33Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 10.
34Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*. Par 35

and so rushing to its own destruction. It does not therefore abolish, but protects private ownership, and, far from weakening the right of private property, it gives it new strength.

Obligations Regarding Superfluous Income

At the same time a man's superfluous income is not left entirely to his own discretion. We speak of that portion of his income which he does not need in order to live as becomes his station. On the contrary, the grave obligations of charity, beneficence and liberality which rest upon the wealthy are constantly insisted upon in telling words by Holy Scripture and the Fathers of the Church.

However, the investment of superfluous income in securing favorable opportunities for employment, provided the labor employed produces results which are really useful, is to be considered, according to the teaching of the Angelic Doctor,[35] an act of real liberality particularly appropriate to the needs of our time.

Titles in Acquiring Ownership

The original acquisition of property takes place by first occupation and by industry, or, as it is called, specification. This is the universal teaching of tradition and the doctrine of Our Predecessor, despite unreasonable assertions to the contrary, and no wrong is done to any man by the occupation of goods unclaimed and which belong to nobody. The only form of labor, however, which gives the workingman a title to its fruits is that which a man exercises as his own master, and by which some new form or new value is produced.

Capital and Labor

Altogether different is the labor one man hires out to another, and which is expended on the property of another. To it apply appositely the words of Leo XIII: "It is only by the labor of workingmen that states grow rich."[36] Is it not indeed apparent that the huge possessions which constitute human wealth are begotten by and flow from the hands of the workingman, toiling either unaided or with the assistance of tools and machinery which wonderfully intensify his efficiency?

Universal experience teaches us that no nation has ever yet risen from want and poverty to a better and loftier station without the unremitting toil of all its citizens, both employers and employed. But it is no less self-evident that these ceaseless labors would have remained ineffective, indeed could never have been at-

35S. Thomas 2. 2. Q. 134. 36Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 27.

tempted, had not God, the Creator of all things, in His goodness bestowed in the first instance the wealth and resources of nature, its treasures and its powers. For what else is work but the application of one's forces of soul and body to these gifts of nature for the development of one's powers by their means?

Now the natural law, or rather, God's Will manifested by it, demands that right order be observed in the application of natural resources to human needs; and this order consists in everything having its proper owner. Hence it follows that unless a man apply his labor to his own property, an alliance must be formed between his toil and his neighbor's property, for each is helpless without the other. This was what Leo XIII had in mind when He wrote: "Capital cannot do without labor, nor labor without capital."[37] It is therefore entirely false to ascribe the results of their combined efforts to either party alone; and it is flagrantly unjust that either should deny the efficacy of the other and seize all the profits.

Unjust Claims of Capital

Capital, however, was long able to appropriate to itself excessive advantages; it claimed all the products and profits and left to the laborer the barest minimum necessary to repair his strength and to ensure the continuation of his class. For by an inexorable economic law, it was held, all accumulation of riches must fall to the share of the wealthy, while the workingman must remain perpetually in indigence or reduced to the minimum needed for existence. It is true that the actual state of things was not always and everywhere as deplorable as the Liberalistic tenets of the so-called Manchester School might lead us to conclude; but it cannot be denied that a steady drift of economic and social tendencies was in this direction. These false opinions and specious axioms were vehemently attacked, as was to be expected, and by others also than merely those whom such principles deprived of their innate right to better their condition.

Unjust Claims of Labor

The cause of the harassed workingman was espoused by the "intellectuals," as they are called, who set up in opposition to this fictitious law another equally false moral principle: that all products and profits, excepting those required to repair and replace invested capital belong by every right to the workingman. This error, more subtle than that of the Socialists who hold that all

[37]Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 15.

means of production should be transferred to the State (or, as they term it, socialized), is for that reason more dangerous and apt to deceive the unwary. It is an alluring poison, consumed with avidity by many not deceived by open Socialism.

Principle of Just Distribution

To prevent erroneous doctrines of this kind from blocking the path of justice and peace, the advocates of these opinions should have hearkened to the wise words of Our Predecessor: "The earth even though apportioned amongst private owners, ceases not thereby to minister to the needs of all."[38] This teaching We ourselves have reaffirmed above when We wrote that the division of goods which is effected by private ownership is ordained by nature itself and has for its purpose that created things may minister to man's needs in orderly and stable fashion. These principles must be constantly borne in mind if we would not wander from the path of truth.

Now, not every kind of distribution of wealth and property amongst men is such that it can at all, and still less can adequately, attain the end intended by God. Wealth, therefore, which is constantly being augmented by social and economic progress, must be so distributed amongst the various individuals and classes of society that the common good of all, of which Leo XIII spoke, be thereby promoted. In other words, the good of the whole community must be safeguarded. By these principles of social justice one class is forbidden to exclude the other from a share in the profits. This sacred law is violated by an irresponsible wealthy class who, in the excess of their good fortune, deem it a just state of things that they should receive everything and the laborer nothing; it is violated also by a propertyless wage-earning class who demand for themselves all the fruits of production, as being the work of their hands. Such men, vehemently incensed against the violation of justice by capitalists, go too far in vindicating the one right of which they are conscious; they attack and seek to abolish all forms of ownership and all profits not obtained by labor, whatever be their nature or significance in human society, for the sole reason that they are not acquired by toil. In this connection it must be noted that the appeal made by some to the words of the Apostle: "If any man will not work, neither let him eat,"[39] is as inept as it is unfounded. The Apostle is here passing judgment on those who refuse to work though they could and ought to do so; he admonishes us to use diligently our time and our powers of body

[38]Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 7.

[39]2 Thess. iii. 10.

and mind, and not to become burdensome to others as long as we are able to provide for ourselves. In no sense does he teach that labor is the sole title which gives a right to a living or to profits.[40]

Each class, then, must receive its due share, and the distribution of created goods must be brought into conformity with the demands of the common good and social justice, for every sincere observer is conscious that the vast differences between the few who hold excessive wealth and the many who live in destitution constitute a grave evil in modern society.

The Uplifting of the Proletariat

This is the aim which Our Predecessor urged as the necessary object of our efforts: the uplifting of the proletariat. It calls for more emphatic assertion and more insistent repetition on the present occasion because these salutary injunctions of the Pontiff have not infrequently been forgotten, deliberately ignored, or deemed impracticable, though they were both feasible and imperative. They have lost none of their force or wisdom for our own age, even though the horrible "pauperism" of the days of Leo XIII is less prevalent today. The condition of the workingman has indeed been improved and rendered more equitable in many respects, particularly in the larger and more civilized states, where the laboring class can no longer be said to be universally in misery and want. But after modern machinery and modern industry had progressed with astonishing speed and taken possession of many newly colonized countries no less than of the ancient civilizations of the Far East, the number of the dispossessed laboring masses, whose groans mount to Heaven from these lands, increased beyond all measure.

Moreover, there is the immense army of hired rural laborers, whose condition is depressed in the extreme, and who have no hope of ever obtaining a share in the land.[41] These too, unless efficacious remedies be applied, will remain perpetually sunk in their proletarian condition.

It is true that there is a formal difference between pauperism and proletarianism. Nevertheless, the immense number of propertyless wage-earners on the one hand, and the superabundant riches of the fortunate few on the other, is an unanswerable argument that the earthly goods so abundantly produced in this age of industrialism are far from rightly distributed and equitably shared among the various classes of men.

40 2 Thess. iii. 8, 10

41 Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 35.

Proletarian Conditions to be Overcome by Wage-Earner Ownership

Every effort, therefore, must be made that at least in future a just share only of the fruits of production be permitted to accumulate in the hands of the wealthy, and that an ample sufficiency be supplied to the workingmen. The purpose is not that these become slack at their work, for man is born to labor as the bird to fly, but that by thrift they may increase their possessions and by the prudent management of the same may be enabled to bear the family burden with greater ease and security, being freed from that hand-to-mouth uncertainty which is the lot of the proletarian. Thus they will not only be in a position to support life's changing fortunes, but will also have the reassuring confidence that when their lives are ended, some little provision will remain for those whom they leave behind them.

These ideas were not merely suggested, but stated in frank and open terms by Our Predecessor. We emphasize them with renewed insistence in this present Encyclical; for unless serious attempts be made, with all energy and without delay to put them into practice, let nobody persuade himself that the peace and tranquillity of human society can be effectively defended against the forces of revolution!

A Just Wage

This program cannot, however, be realized unless the propertyless wage-earner be placed in such circumstances that by skill and thrift he can acquire a certain moderate ownership, as was already declared by Us, following the footsteps of Our Predecessor. But how can he ever save money, except from his wages and by living sparingly, who has nothing but his labor by which to obtain food and the necessaries of life? Let us turn, therefore, to the question of wages, which Leo XIII held to be "of great importance,"[42] stating and explaining where necessary its principles and precepts.

Wage Contract Not Essentially Unjust

And first of all, those who hold that the wage-contract is essentially unjust, and that in its place must be introduced the contract of partnership, are certainly in error. They do a grave injury to Our Predecessor, whose Encyclical not only admits this contract, but devotes much space to its determination according to the principles of justice.

In the present state of human society, however, We deem it ad-

42Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*. Par. 34.

visable that the wage-contract should, when possible, be modified somewhat by a contract of partnership, as is already being tried in various ways to the no small gain both of the wage-earners and of the employers. In this way wage-earners are made sharers in some sort in the ownership, or the management, or the profits.

In estimating a just wage, not one consideration alone but many must be taken into account, according to the wise words of Leo XIII: "Before deciding whether wages are fair, many things have to be considered."[43]

In this way He refuted the irresponsible view of certain writers who declare that this momentous question can easily be solved by the application of a single principle, and that not even a true one.

Entirely false is the principle, widely propagated today, that the worth of labor and therefore the equitable return to be made for it, should equal the worth of its net result. Thus the right to the full product of his toil is claimed for the wage-earner. How erroneous this is appears from what We have written above concerning capital and labor.

Individual and Social Character of Labor

The obvious truth is that in labor, especially hired labor, as in ownership, there is a social as well as a personal or individual aspect to be considered. For unless human society forms a truly social and organic body; unless labor be protected in the social and juridical order; unless the various forms of human endeavor, dependent one upon the other, are united in mutual harmony and mutual support; unless, above all, brains, capital and labor combine together for common effort, man's toil cannot produce due fruit. Hence, if the social and individual character of labor be overlooked, it can be neither equitably appraised nor properly recompensed according to strict justice.

From this double aspect, growing out of the very notion of human labor, follow important conclusions for the regulation and fixing of wages.

Support of the Workingman and His Family

In the first place, the wage paid to the workingman must be sufficient for the support of himself and of his family.[44] It is right indeed that the rest of the family contribute according to their power towards the common maintenance, as in the rural home or in the families of many artisans and small shop keepers. But it is wrong to abuse the tender years of children or the weakness of

[43] Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 17 [44] Encycl *Casti Connubii*, December 31, 1930.

woman. Mothers will above all devote their work to the home and the things connected with it. Intolerable, and to be opposed with all our strength, is the abuse whereby mothers of families, because of the insufficiency of the father's salary, are forced to engage in gainful occupations outside the domestic walls, to the neglect of their own proper cares and duties, particularly the education of their children.

Every effort must therefore be made that fathers of families receive a wage sufficient to meet adequately ordinary domestic needs. If in the present state of society this is not always feasible, social justice demands that reforms be introduced without delay which will guarantee every adult workingman just such a wage. In this connection We might utter a word of praise for various systems devised and attempted in practice, by which an increased wage is paid in view of increased family burdens, and a special provision is made for special needs.

The State of Business

The condition of any particular business and of its owner must also come into question in settling the scale of wages; for it is unjust to demand wages so high that an employer cannot pay them without ruin, and without consequent distress amongst the working people themselves. If the business make smaller profit on account of bad management, want of enterprise or out-of-date methods, this is not a just reason for reducing the workingmen's wages. If, however, the business does not make enough money to pay the workman a just wage, either because it is overwhelmed with unjust burdens, or because it is compelled to sell its products at an unjustly low price, those who thus injure it are guilty of grievous wrong; for it is they who deprive the workingmen of the just wage, and force them to accept lower terms.

Let employers, therefore, and employed join in their plans and efforts to overcome all difficulties and obstacles, and let them be aided in this wholesome endeavor by the wise measures of the public authority. In the last extreme, counsel must be taken whether the business can continue, or whether some other provision should be made for the workers. The guiding spirit in this crucial decision should be one of mutual understanding and Christian harmony between employers and workers.

The Exigencies of the Common Good

Finally, the wage scale must be regulated with a view to the economic welfare of the whole people. We have already shown

how conducive it is to the common good that wage-earners of all kinds be enabled by economizing that portion of their wage which remains after necessary expenses have been met, to attain to the possession of a certain modest fortune. Another point, however, of no less importance must not be overlooked, in these our days especially, namely, that opportunities for work be provided for those who are willing and able to work. This depends in large measure upon the scale of wages, which multiplies opportunities for work as long as it remains within proper limits, and reduces them if allowed to pass these limits. All are aware that a scale of wages too low, no less than a scale excessively high, causes unemployment. Now unemployment, particularly if widespread and of long duration, as We have been forced to experience it during Our Pontificate, is a dreadful scourge; it causes misery and temptation to the laborer, ruins the prosperity of nations, and endangers public order, peace and tranquillity the world over. To lower or raise wages unduly, with a view to private profit, and with no consideration for the common good, is contrary to social justice which demands that by union of effort and good will such a scale of wages be set up, if possible, as to offer to the greatest number opportunities of employment and of securing for themselves suitable means of livelihood.

A reasonable relationship between different wages here enters into consideration. Intimately connected with this is a reasonable relationship between the prices obtained for the products of the various economic groups: agrarian, industrial, etc. Where this harmonious proportion is kept, man's various economic activities combine and unite into one single organism and become members of a common body, lending each other mutual help and service. For then only will the economic and social organism be soundly established and attain its end, when it secures for all and each those goods which the wealth and resources of nature, technical achievement, and the social organization of economic affairs can give. These goods should be sufficient to supply all needs and an honest livelihood, and to uplift men to that higher level of prosperity and culture which, provided it be used with prudence, is not only no hindrance but is of singular help to virtue.[45]

The Reconstruction of the Social Order

What We have written thus far regarding a right distribution of property and a just scale of wages is concerned directly with the individual, and deals only indirectly with the social order. To this

[45]Cf. S. Thomas, *De Regimine Principum*, 1, 15; Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 27.

latter, however, Our Predecessor, Leo XIII, devoted special thought and care in his efforts to reconstruct and perfect it according to the principles of sound philosophy and the sublime precepts of the Gospel.[46]

A happy beginning has here been made. But in order that what has been well begun may be rendered stable, that what has not yet been accomplished may now be achieved, and that still richer and brighter blessings may descend upon mankind, two things are particularly necessary: the reform of the social order and the correction of morals.

When We speak of the reform of the social order it is principally the State We have in mind. Not indeed that all salvation is to be hoped for from its intervention; but because on account of the evil of Individualism, as We called it, things have come to such a pass that the highly developed social life which once flourished in a variety of prosperous institutions organically linked with each other, has been damaged and all but ruined, leaving thus virtually only individuals and the State. Social life lost entirely its organic form. The State, which now was encumbered with all the burdens once borne by associations rendered extinct by it, was in consequence submerged and overwhelmed by an infinity of affairs and duties.

It is indeed true, as history clearly proves, that owing to the change in social conditions, much that was formerly done by small bodies can nowadays be accomplished only by large corporations. None the less, just as it is wrong to withdraw from the individual and commit to the community at large what private enterprise and industry can accomplish, so too it is an injustice, a grave evil and a disturbance of right order for a larger and higher organization to arrogate to itself functions which can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower bodies. This is a fundamental principle of social philosophy, unshaken and unchangeable, and it retains its full truth today. Of its very nature the true aim of all social activity should be to help individual members of the social body, but never to destroy or absorb them.

The State should leave to these smaller groups the settlement of business of minor importance. It will thus carry out with greater freedom, power and success the tasks belonging to it, because it alone can effectively accomplish these, directing, watching, stimulating and restraining, as circumstances suggest or necessity demands. Let those in power, therefore, be convinced that the more faithfully this principle be followed, and a graded hierarch-

[46]Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 16.

ical order exist between the various subsidiary organizations, the more excellent will be both the authority and the efficiency of the social organization as a whole and the happier and more prosperous the condition of the State.

Harmony Between Ranks in Society

Now this is the primary duty of the State and of all good citizens, to abolish conflict between classes with divergent interests, and thus foster and promote harmony between the various ranks of society.

The aim of social legislation must therefore be the reestablishment of vocational groups. Society today still remains in a strained and therefore unstable and uncertain state, being founded on classes with contradictory interests and hence opposed to each other, and consequently prone to enmity and strife. Labor, indeed, as has been well said by Our Predecessor in his Encyclical, is not a mere chattel, since the human dignity of the workingman must be recognized in it, and consequently it cannot be bought and sold like any piece of merchandise. None the less the demand and supply of labor divides men on the labor market into two classes, as into two camps, and the bargaining between these parties transforms this labor market into an arena where the two armies are engaged in combat. To this grave disorder, which is leading society to ruin, a remedy must evidently be applied as speedily as possible. But there cannot be question of any perfect cure, except this opposition be done away with, and well-ordered members of the social body come into being anew, vocational groups namely, binding men together not according to the position they occupy in the labor market, but according to the diverse functions which they exercise in society. For as nature induces those who dwell in close proximity to unite into municipalities, so those who practice the same trade or profession, economic or otherwise, combine into vocational groups. These groups, in a true sense autonomous, are considered by many to be, if not essential to civil society, at least its natural and spontaneous development.

Order, as the Angelic Doctor well defines, is unity arising from the apt arrangement of a plurality of objects; hence, true and genuine social order demands various members of society, joined together by a common bond.[47] Such a bond of union is provided on the one hand by the common effort of employers and employees of one and the same group joining forces to produce goods or give service; on the other hand, by the common good which all groups

47S. Thomas, *Cont., Gent.* 3, 71: Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, Q. 65; A. 2 C. C.

should unite to promote, each in its own sphere, with friendly harmony. Now this union will become powerful and efficacious in proportion to the fidelity with which the individuals and the groups strive to discharge their professional duties and to excel in them.

From this it is easy to conclude that in these associations the common interests of the whole group must predominate; and among these interests the most important is the directing of the activities of the group to the common good. Regarding cases in which interests of employers and employees call for special care and protection against opposing interests, separate deliberation will take place in their respective assemblies and separate votes will be taken as the matter may require.

It is hardly necessary to note that what Leo XIII taught concerning the form of political government can, in due measure, be applied also to vocational groups. Here, too, men may choose whatever form they please, provided that both justice and the common good be taken into account.[48]

Just as the citizens of the same municipality are wont to form associations with diverse aims, which various individuals are free to join or not, similarly, those who are engaged in the same trade or profession will form free associations among themselves, for purposes connected with their occupations. Our Predecessor has explained clearly and lucidly the nature of these free associations. We are content, therefore, to emphasize this one point: Not only is man free to institute these unions which are of a private character, but he has the right "further to adopt such organization and such rules as may best conduce to the attainment of their respective objects."[49] The same liberty must be claimed for the founding of associations which extend beyond the limits of a single trade. Let those free associations which already flourish and produce salutary fruits make it the goal of their endeavors, in accordance with Christian social doctrine, to prepare the way and to do their part towards the realization of that ideal type of vocational groups which We have mentioned above.

The Restoration of the True Guiding Principle of Economics

Still another aim intimately connected with the preceding must be kept in view. Just as the unity of human society cannot be built upon class warfare, so the proper ordering of economic affairs cannot be left to free competition alone. From this source have proceeded in the past all the errors of the "In-

[48]Encycl. *Immortale Dei*, Nov. 1, 1885. [49]Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 42.

dividualistic" school. This school, ignorant or forgetful of the social and moral aspect of economic matters, teaches that the State should refrain in theory and practice from interfering therein, because these possess in free competition and open markets a principle of self-direction better able to control them than any created intellect. Free competition, however, though within certain limits just and productive of good results, cannot be the ruling principle of the economic world; this has been abundantly proved by the consequences that have followed from the free rein given to these dangerous individualistic ideals. It is therefore very necessary that economic affairs be once more subjected to and governed by a true and effective guiding principle. Still less can this function be exercised by the economic supremacy which within recent times has taken the place of free competition; for this is a headstrong and vehement power, which, if it is to prove beneficial to mankind, needs to be curbed strongly and ruled with prudence. It cannot, however, be curbed and governed by itself. More lofty and noble principles must therefore be sought in order to control this supremacy sternly and uncompromisingly; to wit, social justice and social charity.

To that end all the institutions of public and social life must be imbued with the spirit of justice, and this justice must above all be truly operative, must build up a juridical and social order able to pervade all economic activity. Social charity should be, as it were, the soul of this order and the duty of the State will be to protect and defend it effectively. This task it will perform the more readily if it free itself from those burdens which, as We have already declared, are not properly its own.

Further, it would be well if the various nations in common counsel and endeavor strove to promote a healthy economic cooperation by prudent pacts and institutions, since in economic matters they are largely dependent one upon the other, and need one another's help.

If then the members of the social body be thus reformed, and if the true directive principle of social and economic activity be thus reestablished, it will be possible to say, in a sense, of this body what the Apostle said of the Mystical Body of Christ: "The whole body, being compacted and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in charity."[50]

Within recent times, as all are aware, a special syndical and

[50]Eph. iv. 16.

corporative organization has been inaugurated which, in view of the subject of the present Encyclical, demands of Us some mention and opportune comment.

The State here grants legal recognition to the syndicate or union, and thereby confers on it some of the features of a monopoly, for in virtue of this recognition, it alone can represent respectively workingmen and employers, and it alone can conclude labor contracts and labor agreements. Affiliation to the syndicate is optional for everyone; but in this sense only can the syndical organization be said to be free, since the contribution to the union and other special taxes are obligatory for all who belong to a given branch, whether workingmen or employers, and the labor-contracts drawn up by the legal syndicate are likewise obligatory. It is true that it has been authoritatively declared that the legal syndicate does not exclude the existence of unrecognized trade associations.

The corporations are composed of representatives of the unions of workingmen and employers of the same trade or profession, and as true and genuine organs and institutions of the State, they direct and coordinate the activities of the unions in all matters of common interest.

Strikes and lock-outs are forbidden. If the contending parties cannot come to an agreement, public authority intervenes.

Little reflection is required to perceive the advantage of the institution thus summarily described: peaceful collaboration of the classes, repression of Socialist organizations and efforts, the moderating influence of a special ministry.

But in order to overlook nothing in a matter of such importance, and in the light of the general principles stated above, as well as of that which We are now about to formulate, We feel bound to add that to Our knowledge there are some who fear that the State is substituting itself in the place of private initiative, instead of limiting itself to necessary and sufficient help and assistance. It is feared that the new syndical and corporative institution possesses an excessively bureaucratic and political character, and that, notwithstanding the general advantages referred to above, it risks serving particular political aims rather than contributing to the initiation of a better social order.

We believe that to attain this last named lofty purpose for the true and permanent advantage of the commonwealth, there is need before and above all else of the blessing of God, and, in the second place, of the cooperation of all men of good will. We believe, moreover, as a necessary consequence, that the end intended will

be the more certainly attained, the greater the contribution furnished by men of technical, commercial and social competence, and, more still, by Catholic principles and their application. We look for this contribution, not to Catholic Action (which has no intention of displaying any strictly syndical or political activities), but to Our sons, whom Catholic Action imbues with these principles and trains for the Apostolate under the guidance and direction of the Church, of the Church, We say, which in the above mentioned sphere, as in all others where moral questions are discussed and regulated, cannot forget or neglect its mandate as custodian and teacher, given it by God.

However, all that We have taught about reconstructing and perfecting the social order will be of no avail without a reform of manners; of this, history affords the clearest evidence. At one period there existed a social order which, though by no means perfect in every respect, corresponded nevertheless in a certain measure to right reason according to the needs and conditions of the times. That this order has long since perished, is not due to the fact that it was incapable of development and adaptation to changing needs and circumstances, but rather to the wrong-doing of men. Men were hardened in excessive self-love and refused to extend that order, as was their duty, to the increasing numbers of the people; or else, deceived by the attractions of false liberty and other errors, they grew impatient of every restraint and endeavored to throw off all authority.

It remains for Us then to turn Our attention to the actual condition of the economic order and to its bitterest adversary and accuser—We mean Socialism. On these We shall pronounce a frank and just sentence; shall examine more closely the root of the present grave evils; and shall indicate the first and most necessary remedy, which lies in a reform of morals.

Changes Since Leo XIII

Since the time of Leo XIII important changes have taken place both in economic conditions and in regard to Socialism. In the first place, it is obvious to all that the entire economic scene has greatly changed. You are aware, Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children, that Our Predecessor, of happy memory, had chiefly in mind that economic régime in which were provided by different people the capital and labor jointly needed for production. He described it in a happy phrase: "Capital cannot do without Labor nor Labor without Capital."[51]

[51] Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 15.

Leo XIII's whole endeavor was to adjust this economic régime to the standards of true order; whence it follows that the system itself is not to be condemned. And surely it is not vicious of its very nature; but it violates right order whenever capital so employs the working or wage-earning classes as to divert business and economic activity entirely to its own arbitrary will and advantage without any regard to the human dignity of the workers, the social character of economic life, social justice and the common good.

It is true that even today these economic conditions do not everywhere exist exclusively, for there is another economic system which still embraces a very large and influential group of men. There are for instance the agricultural classes, who form the larger portion of the human family and who find in their occupation the means of obtaining honestly and justly what is needful for their maintenance. This system, too, has its difficulties and problems, of which Our Predecessor spoke repeatedly in his Encyclical, and to which We Ourselves have more than once referred in the present Letter.

But it is the capitalist economic régime that, with the world-wide diffusion of industry, has penetrated everywhere, particularly since the publication of Leo XIII's Encyclical. It has invaded and pervaded the economic and social sphere even of those who live outside its ambit, influencing them, and, as it were, intimately affecting them by its advantages, inconveniences and vices.

When We turn Our attention, therefore, to the changes which this capitalistic economic order has undergone since the days of Leo XIII, We have regard to the interests, not of those only who live in countries where "Capital" and industry prevail, but of the whole human race.

Domination Has Followed from Free Competition

In the first place, then, it is patent that in our days not alone is wealth accumulated, but immense power and despotic economic domination is concentrated in the hands of a few, and that those few are frequently not the owners, but only the trustees and directors of invested funds, who administer them at their good pleasure.

This power becomes particularly irresistible when exercised by those who, because they hold and control money, are able also to govern credit and determine its allotment, for that reason supplying so to speak, the life-blood to the entire economic body, and

grasping, as it were, in their hands the very soul of production, so that no one dare breathe against their will.

This accumulation of power, the characteristic note of the modern economic order, is a natural result of limitless free competition which permits the survival of those only who are the strongest, which often means those who fight most relentlessly, who pay least heed to the dictates of conscience.

This concentration of power has led to a threefold struggle for domination. First, there is the struggle for dictatorship in the economic sphere itself; then, the fierce battle to acquire control of the State, so that its resources and authority may be abused in the economic struggles; finally, the clash between States themselves.

This latter arises from two causes: because the nations apply their power and political influence, regardless of circumstances, to promote the economic advantages of their citizens; and because, vice versa, economic forces and economic domination are used to decide political controversies between peoples.

Disastrous Consequences

You assuredly know, Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children, and you lament the ultimate consequences of this Individualistic spirit in economic affairs. Free competition is dead; economic dictatorship has taken its place.

Unbridled ambition for domination has succeeded the desire for gain; the whole economic life has become hard, cruel and relentless in a ghastly measure. Furthermore, the intermingling and scandalous confusing of the duties and offices of civil authority and of economics have produced crying evils and have gone so far as to degrade the majesty of the State. The State which should be the supreme arbiter, ruling in kingly fashion far above all party contention, intent only upon justice and the common good, has become instead a slave, bound over to the service of human passion and greed. As regards the relations of peoples among themselves, a double stream has issued forth from this one fountainhead: on the one hand, economic Nationalism or even economic Imperialism; on the other, a not less noxious and detestable Internationalism or international Imperialism in financial affairs, which holds that where a man's fortune is, there is his country.

The remedies for these great evils We have exposed in the second part of the present Encyclical, where We explicitly dwelt upon their doctrinal aspect. It will, therefore, be sufficient to

recall them briefly here. Since the present economic régime is based mainly upon Capital and Labor, it follows that the principles of right reason and Christian social philosophy regarding Capital, Labor and their mutual cooperation must be accepted in theory and reduced to practice. In the first place, due consideration must be had for the double character, individual and social, of Capital and Labor, in order that the dangers of Individualism and of Collectivism be avoided. The mutual relations between Capital and Labor must be determined according to the laws of the strictest justice, called commutative justice, supported however by Christian charity. Free competition and still more economic domination must be kept within just and definite limits, and must be brought under the effective control of the public authority, in matters appertaining to this latter's competence. The public institutions of the nations must be such as to make the whole of human society conform to the common good, *i. e.*, to the standard of social justice. If this is done, the economic system, that most important branch of social life, will necessarily be restored to sanity and right order.

Changes in Socialism

Since the days of Leo XIII, Socialism too, the great enemy with which his battles were waged, has undergone profound changes, no less than economics. At that time Socialism could fairly be termed a single system, which defended certain definite and mutually coherent doctrines. Nowadays it has in the main become divided into two opposing, and often bitterly hostile camps, neither of which, however, has abandoned the principle peculiar to Socialism, namely, opposition to the Christian Faith.

The More Violent Section Communism

One section of Socialism has undergone approximately the same change through which, as We have described, the capitalistic economic régime has passed; it has degenerated into Communism. Communism teaches and pursues a two-fold aim: merciless class warfare and complete abolition of private ownership; and this it does, not in secret and by hidden methods, but openly, frankly, and by every means, even the most violent. To obtain these ends, Communists shrink from nothing and fear nothing; and when they have attained power it is unbelievable, indeed it seems portentous, how cruel and inhuman they show themselves to be. Evidence for this is the ghastly destruction and ruin with which they have laid waste immense tracts of Eastern Europe and Asia, while their

antagonism and open hostility to Holy Church and to God Himself are, alas! but too well known and proved by their deeds. We do not think it necessary to warn upright and faithful children of the Church against the impious and nefarious character of Communism. But We cannot contemplate without sorrow the heedlessness of those who seem to make light of these imminent dangers and with stolid indifference allow the propagation far and wide of those doctrines which seek by violence and bloodshed the destruction of all society. Even more severely must be condemned the foolhardiness of those who neglect to remove or modify such conditions as exasperate the minds of the people, and so prepare the way for the overthrow and ruin of the social order.

More Moderate Section

The other section, which has retained the name of Socialism, is much less radical in its views. Not only does it condemn recourse to physical force; it even mitigates and moderates to some extent class warfare and the abolition of private property, it does not reject them entirely. It would seem as if Socialism were afraid of its own principles and of the conclusion drawn therefrom by the Communists, and in consequence were drifting towards the truth which Christian tradition has always held in respect; for it cannot be denied that its programs often strikingly approach the just demands of Christian social reformers.

It recedes somewhat from class war and the extinction of ownership.

Class war, provided it abstains from enmities and mutual hatred, is changing gradually to an honest discussion of differences, based upon the desire of social justice. If this is by no means the blessed social peace which we all long for, it can be and must be an approach towards the mutual cooperation of vocational groups. The war declared against private ownership has also abated more and more in such a way that nowadays it is not really the possession of the means of production which is attacked but that type of social rulership, which, in violation of all justice, has been seized and usurped by the owners of wealth. This rulership in fact belongs, not to the individual owners, but to the State.

If these changes continue, it may well come about that gradually the tenets of mitigated Socialism will no longer be different from the program of those who seek to reform human society according to Christian principles.

For it is rightly contended that certain forms of property must be reserved to the State, since they carry with them an opportunity

of domination too great to be left to private individuals without injury to the community at large.

Just demands and desires of this kind contain nothing opposed to Christian truth, nor are they in any sense peculiar to Socialism. Those therefore who look for nothing else, have no reason for becoming Socialists.

The Possibility of a Middle Course

It must not be imagined however that all the Socialist sects or factions which are not Communist, have in fact or in theory uniformly returned to this reasonable position. For the most part they do not reject class warfare and the abolition of property, but merely are more moderate in regard to them. Now, when false principles are thus mitigated and in some sense waived, the question arises, or is unwarrantably proposed in certain quarters, whether the principles of Christian truth also could not be somewhat moderated and attenuated, so as to meet Socialism, as it were, halfway upon common ground. Some are enticed by the empty hope of gaining in this way the Socialists to our cause. But such hopes are vain. Those who wish to be apostles amongst the Socialists should preach the Christian truth whole and entire, openly and sincerely, without any connivance with error. If they wish in truth to be heralds of the Gospel, let their endeavor be to convince Socialists that their demands, in so far as they are just, are defended much more cogently by the principles of Christian faith, and are promoted much more efficaciously by the power of Christian charity.

But what if, in questions of class war and private ownership, Socialism were to become so mitigated and amended, that nothing reprehensible could any longer be found in it? Would it by that very fact have laid aside its character of hostility to the Christian religion? This is a question which holds many minds in suspense; and many are the Catholics who, realizing clearly that Christian principles can never be either sacrificed or minimized, seem to be raising their eyes towards the Holy See, and earnestly beseeching Us to decide whether or not this form of Socialism has retracted so far its false doctrines that it can now be accepted without the loss of any Christian principle, and be baptized into the Church. In Our fatherly solicitude We desire to satisfy these petitions, and We pronounce as follows: Whether Socialism be considered as a doctrine, or as a historical fact, or as a movement, if it really remain Socialism, it cannot be brought into harmony with the dogmas of the Catholic Church, even after it has yielded to truth

and justice in the points We have mentioned; the reason being that it conceives human society in a way utterly alien to Christian truth.

Socialism Conceives Society and Social Character of Men Foreign to Christian Truth

For according to Christian doctrine, man, endowed with a social nature, is placed here on earth in order that he may spend his life in society, and under an authority ordained by God; that he may develop and evolve to the full all his faculties to the praise and glory of his Creator; and that, by fulfilling faithfully the duties of his station, he may attain to temporal and eternal happiness. Socialism, on the contrary, entirely ignorant of or unconcerned about this sublime end both of individuals and of society, affirms that living in community was instituted merely for the sake of the advantages which it brings to mankind.

Goods are produced more efficiently by a suitable distribution of labor than by the scattered efforts of individuals. Hence the Socialists argue that economic production, of which they see only the material side, must necessarily be carried on collectively, and that because of this necessity men must surrender and submit themselves wholly to society with a view to the production of wealth. Indeed, the possession of the greatest possible amount of temporal goods is esteemed so highly, that man's higher goods, not excepting liberty, must, they claim, be subordinated and even sacrificed to the exigencies of efficient production. They affirm that the loss of human dignity, which results from these socialized methods of production, will be easily compensated for by the abundance of goods produced in common and accruing to the individual who can turn them at his will to the comforts and culture of life. Society, therefore, as the Socialist conceives it, is, on the one hand, impossible and unthinkable without the use of compulsion of the most excessive kind; on the other it fosters a false liberty, since in such a scheme no place is found for true social authority, which is not based on temporal and material advantages, but descends from God alone, the Creator and Last End of all things.[52]

Catholic and Socialist Are Contradictory Terms

If, like all errors, Socialism contains a certain element of truth (and this the Sovereign Pontiffs have never denied), it is nevertheless founded upon a doctrine of human society peculiarly its own,

[52]Encycl. *Divinum Illud,* June 29, 1881.

which is opposed to true Christianity. "Religious Socialism," "Christian Socialism" are expressions implying a contradiction in terms. No one can be at the same time a sincere Catholic and a true Socialist.

Cultural Socialism

All that We have thus far laid down and established by Our sovereign authority bears application also to a certain new Socialist phenomenon, hitherto little known, but nowadays common to many sections of Socialism. Its main aim is the formation of minds and manners. Under the appearance of friendship, it attracts little children in particular and attaches them to itself, though its activity extends to all the people, to make of them convinced Socialists, upon whom to build society modelled on Socialistic principles.

In Our Encyclical Letter *Divini Illius Magistri*,[53] We have expounded at length the true principles on which Christian education rests and the end which it pursues; the contradiction between these and the actions and aims of cultural Socialism is so clear and evident as to require no comment. Nevertheless, the formidable dangers which this form of Socialism brings in its train seem to be ignored or under-estimated by those who are little concerned to resist it with strength and zeal, as the gravity of the situation demands.

It is a duty of Our pastoral office to warn these men of the grave danger which threatens. Let all bear in mind that the parent of this cultural Socialism was Liberalism, and that its offspring will be Bolshevism.

Catholic Deserters to Socialism

This being so, you can understand, Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children, with what grief We perceive, in certain countries particularly, not a few of Our children, who, while still preserving, as We are convinced, their true faith and good will, have deserted the camp of the Church and passed over to the ranks of Socialism. Some openly boast of its name and profess Socialistic doctrines; others, either through indifference or even almost in spite of themselves, join associations which, in theory or in fact, are Socialist.

In Our paternal solicitude, therefore, We have meditated and sought to understand what can have been the reason of their going so far astray; and We seem to hear what many of them allege in

53Encycl. *Divini Illius Magistri*, December 31, 1929

excuse: The Church and those professing attachment to the Church favor the rich and neglect workingmen and have no care for them: they were obliged therefore in their own interest to join the Socialist ranks.

What a lamentable fact, Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children, that there have been, and that there are even now some who, while professing the Catholic Faith, are well nigh unmindful of that sublime law of justice and charity which binds us not only to give each man his due, but to succor our brethren as Christ Our Lord Himself; worse still, that there are those who out of greed for gain do not shame to oppress the workingman. Indeed there are some who even abuse religion itself, cloaking their own unjust impositions under its name, that they may protect themselves against the clearly just demands of their employees.

We shall never desist from gravely censuring such conduct. Such men are the cause that the Church, without deserving it, may have the appearance and be accused of taking sides with the wealthy, and of being little moved by the needs and sufferings of the disinherited. That these appearances and these accusations are undeserved and unjust, the whole history of the Church clearly shows. The very Encyclical, the anniversary of which we are celebrating, affords the clearest evidences that these calumnies and contumelies have been most unfairly passed upon the Church and upon her teaching.

The Invitation to Return

But We are far indeed from being exasperated by these injustices or dejected by Our pastoral sorrow. We have no wish to drive away or repel Our children who have been so unhappily deceived, and who are wandering so far from the paths of truth and salvation. On the contrary, We invite them with all possible solicitude to return to the maternal bosom of the Church. God grant that they listen to Our voice. God grant that whence they set out, thither they may return, to their father's house; that where their true place is, there they may remain, amongst the ranks of those who, zealously following the directions promulgated by Leo XIII and solemnly repeated by Ourselves, unremittingly endeavor to reform society according to the mind of the Church on a firm basis of social justice and social charity. Let it be their firm persuasion that nowhere, even on earth, can they find an ampler happiness than in company with Him, Who being rich became poor for our sakes. That through His poverty We might become

rich;[54] Who was poor and in labors from His youth;[55] Who invites to Himself all who labor and are burdened that He may refresh them bounteously in the love of His Heart;[56] Who, in fine, without any respect for persons, will require more of him to whom more has been given, and will render to every man according to his works.

Cites Moral Renovation

However, if We examine matters diligently and thoroughly We shall perceive clearly that this longed-for social reconstruction must be preceded by a profound renewal of the Christian spirit, from which multitudes engaged in industry in every country have unhappily departed. Otherwise, all our endeavors will be futile, and our social edifice will be built, not upon a rock, but upon shifting sand.[58]

We have passed in review, Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children, the state of the modern economic world, and have found it suffering from the greatest evils. We have investigated anew Socialism and Communism, and have found them, even in their mitigated forms, far removed from the precepts of the Gospel.

"And if society is to be healed now"—we use the words of Our Predecessor—"in no way can it be healed save by a return to Christian life and Christian institutions,"[59] for Christianity alone can apply an efficacious remedy for the excessive solicitude for transitory things, which is the origin of all vices. When men are fascinated and completely absorbed in the things of the world, it alone can draw away their attention and raise it to Heaven. And who will deny that this remedy is not urgently needed by society?

The Chief Disorder of the Modern World: The Ruin of Souls

For most men are affected almost exclusively by temporal upheavals, disasters and ruins. Yet if we view things with Christian eyes, as we should, what are they all in comparison with the ruin of souls?

Nevertheless, it may be said with all truth that nowadays the conditions of social and economic life are such that vast multitudes of men can only with great difficulty pay attention to that one thing necessary, namely their eternal salvation.

Constituted Pastor and Protector of these innumerable sheep by the Prince of Pastors Who redeemed them by His blood, We

542 Cor. viii. 8. 55Cf. Ps. lxxxvii. 16. 56Cf. Matt. xi. 28. 57Cf. Luke xii 48
58Cf. Matt. vii. 24-27. 59Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, Par. 22.

can scarcely restrain Our tears when We reflect upon the dangers which threaten them. Our pastoral office, moreover, reminds Us to search constantly, with paternal solicitude, for means of coming to their assistance, appealing to the unwearying zeal of others who are bound to this cause by justice and charity. For what will it profit men that a more prudent distribution and use of riches make it possible for them to gain even the whole world, if thereby they suffer the loss of their own souls?[60] What will it profit to teach them sound principles in economics, if they permit themselves to be so swept away by selfishness, by unbridled and sordid greed, that "hearing the Commandments of the Lord, they do all things contrary"?[61]

The Cause of Loss of Souls

The fundamental cause of this defection from the Christian law in social and economic matters, and of the apostasy of many workingmen from the Catholic Faith which has resulted from it, is the disorderly affection of the soul, a sad consequence of original sin, the source of these and of all other evils. By original sin the marvellous harmony of man's faculties has been so deranged that now he is easily led astray by low desires, and strongly tempted to prefer the transient goods of this world to the lasting goods of Heaven.

Hence comes that unquenchable thirst for riches and temporal possessions, which at all times has impelled men to break the law of God and trample on the rights of their neighbor; but the condition of the economic world today lays more snares than ever for human frailty. For the uncertainty of economic conditions and of the whole economic régime demands the keenest and most unceasing straining of energy on the part of those engaged therein; and as a result, some have become so hardened against the stings of conscience as to hold all means good which enable them to increase their profits, and to safeguard against sudden changes of fortune the wealth amassed by unremitting toil. Easy returns, which an open market offers to any one, lead many to interest themselves in trade and exchange, their one aim being to make clear profits with the least labor. By their unchecked speculation prices are raised and lowered out of mere greed for gain, making void all the most prudent calculations of manufacturers.

The regulations legally enacted for corporations, with their divided responsibility and limited liability, have given occasion to abominable abuses. The greatly weakened accountability makes

[60] Cf. Matt. xvi. 26.

[61] Cf. Judges ii. 17.

little impression, as is evident, upon the conscience. The worst injustices and frauds take place beneath the obscurity of the common name of a corporative firm. Boards of directors proceed in their unconscionable methods even to the violation of their trust in regard to those whose savings they administer. In the last place must still be mentioned the unscrupulous but well-calculated speculation of men who, without seeking to answer real needs, appeal to the lowest human passions. These are aroused in order to turn their satisfaction into gain.

A stern insistence on the moral law, enforced with vigor by civil authority, could have dispelled or perhaps averted these enormous evils. This, however, was too often lamentably wanting. For at the time when the new social order was beginning, the doctrines of rationalism had already taken firm hold of large numbers, and an economic science alien to the true moral law had soon arisen, whence it followed that free rein was given to human avarice.

As a result, a much greater number than ever before, solely concerned with adding to their wealth by any means whatsoever, sought their own selfish interests above all things; they had no scruple in committing the gravest injustices against others.

Those who first entered upon this broad way which leads to destruction,[62] easily found many imitators of their iniquity because of their manifest success, their extravagant display of wealth, their derision of the scruples of more delicate consciences and the crushing of more cautious competitors.

With the leaders of business abandoning the true path, it is not surprising that in every country multitudes of workingmen too sank in the same morass; all the more so, because very many employers treated their workmen as mere tools, without any concern for the welfare of their souls, indeed, without the slightest thought of higher interests. The mind shudders if we consider the frightful perils to which the morals of workers (of boys and young men particularly), and the virtue of girls and women are exposed in modern factories; if we recall how the present economic régime and above all the disgraceful housing conditions prove obstacles to the family tie and family life; if we remember the insuperable difficulties placed in the way of a proper observance of the holy days.

How universally has the true Christian spirit become impaired, which formerly produced such lofty sentiments even in uncultured and illiterate men! In its stead, man's one solicitude is to obtain his daily bread in any way he can. And so bodily labor, which

[62] Cf. Matt. vii. 13

was decreed by Providence for the good of man's body and soul even after original sin, has everywhere been changed into an instrument of strange perversion: for dead matter leaves the factory ennobled and transformed, where men are corrupted and degraded.

The Remedies

Economic life must be inspired by Christian principles. For this pitiable ruin of souls, which, if it continue, will frustrate all efforts to reform society,[63] there can be no other remedy than a frank and sincere return to the teaching of the Gospel. Men must observe anew the precepts of Him Who alone has the words of eternal life, words which, even though Heaven and earth be changed, shall not pass away.[64]

All those versed in social matters demand a rationalization of economic life which will introduce sound and true order. But this order, which We Ourselves desire and make every effort to promote, will necessarily be quite faulty and imperfect, unless all man's activities harmoniously unite to imitate and, as far as is humanly possible, attain the marvellous unity of the divine plan. This is the perfect order which the Church preaches with intense earnestness, and which right reason demands; which places God as the first and supreme end of all created activity, and regards all created goods as mere instruments under God, to be used only in so far as they help towards the attainment of our supreme end.

Nor is it to be imagined that remunerative occupations are thereby belittled or deemed less consonant with human dignity. On the contrary, we are taught to recognize and reverence in them the manifest will of God the Creator, Who placed man upon earth to work it and use it in various ways in order to supply his needs. Those who are engaged in production are not forbidden to increase their fortunes in a lawful and just manner; indeed it is just that he who renders service to society and develops its wealth should himself have his proportionate share of the increased public riches, provided always that he respects the laws of God and the rights of his neighbor, and uses his property in accord with faith and right reason. If these principles be observed by all, everywhere and at all times, not merely the production and acquisition of goods, but also the use of wealth, now so often uncontrolled, will within a short time be brought back again to the standards of equity and just distribution.

Mere sordid selfishness, which is the disgrace and the great

[63] Cf. John vi. 69.

[64] Cf. Matt. xxiv. 35.

crime of the present age, will be opposed in very deed by the kindly and forcible law of Christian moderation, whereby man is commanded to seek first the Kingdom of God and His Justice, confiding in God's liberality and definite promise that temporal goods also, in so far as he has need of them, will be added unto him.[65]

The Law of Charity Must Operate

Now, in effecting this reform, charity "which is the bond of perfection,"[66] must play a leading part. How completely deceived are those inconsiderate reformers who, zealous only for commutative justice, proudly disdain the help of charity! Clearly charity cannot take the place of justice unfairly withheld. But, even though a state of things be pictured in which every man receives at last all that is his due, a wide field will nevertheless remain open for charity. For, justice alone, even though most faithfully observed, can remove indeed the cause of social strife, but can never bring about a union of hearts and minds. Yet this union, binding men together, is the main principle of stability in all institutions, no matter how perfect they may seem, which aim at establishing social peace and promoting mutual aid. In its absence, as repeated experience proves, the wisest regulations come to nothing. Then only will it be possible to unite all in harmonious striving for the common good, when all sections of society have the intimate conviction that they are members of a single family and children of the same Heavenly Father, and further, that they are "one body in Christ and everyone members one of another,"[67] so that "if one member suffer anything, all members suffer with it." Then the rich and others in power will change their former negligence of their poorer brethren into solicitous and effective regard;[68] will listen with kindly feeling to their just complaints, and will readily forgive them the faults and mistakes they possibly make. Workingmen too will lay aside all feelings of hatred or envy, which the instigators of social strife arouse so skillfully. Not only will they cease to feel weary of the position assigned them by divine Providence in human society; they will become proud of it, well aware that every man by doing his duty is working usefully and honorably for the common good, and is following in the footsteps of Him, Who, being in the form of God, chose to become a carpenter among men, and to be known as the Son of a carpenter.

A Difficult Task

Because of this new diffusion throughout the world of the Gos-

65Cf. Matt. vi. 33. 66Coloss. iii. 14. 67Rom. xii. 5. 68Phil. ii. 6.

pel spirit, which is a spirit of Christian moderation and of universal charity, We confidently look forward to that complete and much-desired renewal of human society, and to "the Peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ," to which We firmly resolved at the very beginning of Our Pontificate to devote all Our care and all Our pastoral solicitude.[69] You, Venerable Brethren, who by ordinance of the Holy Spirit rule with Us the Church of God,[70] are laboring strenuously and with admirable zeal in all parts of the world, not exclusive of the sacred missions among the pagans, towards this same end of capital importance and necessity today. Receive your well-deserved meed of praise; and with you all those, of the clergy and laity, whom We rejoice to see daily taking part in this great work and affording valuable help: Our beloved sons devoted to Catholic Action, who with extraordinary zeal aid Us in the solution of social problems, in so far as the Church in virtue of her divine institution has the right and the duty to concern herself with them. With repeated insistence We exhort all these in the Lord to spare no labor and be overcome by no difficulty, but daily more to take courage and be valiant.[71]

The task We propose to them is truly difficult, for well do We know that many are the obstacles to be overcome on either side, whether amongst the higher classes of society or the lower. Still, let them not lose heart, nor in any way allow themselves to be diverted by any art from their purpose. To face stern combats is the part of a Christian, and to endure labor is the lot of those, who, as good soldiers of Christ,[72] follow closely in His footsteps.

Relying therefore solely on the assistance of Him Who "will have all men be saved,"[73] let us devote all our energies to helping those unhappy souls who are turned away from God; let us withdraw them from the temporal cares in which they are too much involved, and teach them to aspire with confidence to things that are eternal. At times, indeed, this will be easier to accomplish than appears at first sight; for if in the depths of even the most abandoned hearts, there lurk, like sparks beneath the ashes, spiritual forces of unexpected strength—a clear testimony of a "naturally Christian soul"—how much more then must these abide in the hearts of the many who largely through ignorance and unfavorable surroundings have wandered into error!

For the rest, the associations of the workingmen themselves provide glad signs of coming social reconstruction. To the great

69Encycl. *Ubi Arcano,* December 23, 1922.
70Cf. Acts xx. 28.
71Cf. Deut. xxxi. 7.
72 2 Tim. ii. 3.
73 1 Tim. ii. 4.

joy of Our Heart We discern amongst them dense masses of young workers who listen readily to the call of divine grace and strive with splendid zeal to win their fellows to Christ. No less praise is due to those leaders of workingmen's organizations who, sacrificing their own interests, and anxious only for the good of their companions, strive with prudence to bring their just demands into harmony with the prosperity of their entire vocational group, nor by any obstacle or misgiving do they permit themselves to be deterred from this noble task. Further, many young men, destined soon by reason of their talents or their wealth to hold distinguished places in the foremost ranks of society, are studying social problems with growing earnestness. These youths encourage the fairest hopes that they will devote themselves wholly to social reforms.

The Course to be Followed

Present circumstances therefore, Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children, indicate clearly the course to be followed. Nowadays, as more than once in the history of the Church, we are confronted with a world which in large measure has almost fallen back into paganism. In order to bring back to Christ these whole classes of men who have denied Him, we must gather and train from amongst their very ranks auxiliary soldiers of the Church, men who know their mentality and their aspirations, and who with kindly fraternal charity will be able to win their hearts. Undoubtedly the first and immediate apostles of the workingmen must themselves be workingmen, while the apostles of the industrial and commercial world should themselves be employers and merchants. It is your chief duty, Venerable Brethren, and that of your clergy, to seek diligently, to select prudently, and train fittingly these lay apostles, amongst workingmen and amongst employers.

No easy task is here imposed upon the clergy, wherefore all candidates for the sacred priesthood must be adequately prepared to meet it by intense study of social matters. It is particularly necessary, however, that they whom you specially select and devote to this work should show themselves endowed with a keen sense of justice, ready to oppose with real manly constancy unjust claims and unjust actions; that they avoid every extreme with consummate prudence and discretion; above all, that they be thoroughly imbued with the charity of Christ, which alone has power to incline men's hearts and wills firmly and gently to the laws of equity and justice. This course, already productive of success in the past, we must follow now with alacrity.

Further, We earnestly exhort in the Lord the beloved sons who are chosen for this task, to devote themselves wholeheartedly to the formation of the men entrusted to them. In the execution of this most priestly and apostolic work, let them make opportune use of the powerful resources of Christian training, by instructing youth, by founding Christian associations, by forming study circles on Christian lines.

Above all, let them hold in high esteem and employ with diligence for the benefit of their disciples the spiritual exercises, a most precious means of personal and of social reform, as We said in Our Encyclical *Mens Nostra.* These exercises We declared in express terms to be most useful for the laity in general and especially for workingmen, and We warmly recommended them; for in that school of the spirit not only are excellent Christians formed, but real apostles of every state of life are trained and enkindled with the fire of the Heart of Christ. From that school they will go forth, as the Apostles from the Cenacle in Jerusalem, strong in faith, unconquerable in steadfastness under trials, aflame with zeal, eager only for the spread in every way of the Kingdom of Christ.

And in truth, the world has nowadays sore need of valiant soldiers of Christ, who strain every thew and sinew to preserve the human family from the dire havoc which would befall it were the teachings of the Gospel to be flouted, and a social order permitted to prevail, which spurns no less the laws of nature than those of God. For herself the Church of Christ, built upon the solid rock, has nothing to fear, for she knows that the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against her;[74] and the experience of centuries has taught her that storms, even the most violent, pass, leaving her stronger and triumphantly victorious. But her maternal bosom cannot but be stirred at the thought of the countless ills which tempests of the kind would occasion to so many thousands; at the thought, above all, of the immense spiritual evils which would ensue, entailing the eternal ruin of so many souls redeemed by the Blood of Christ. No stone, then, must be left unturned to avert these grave misfortunes from human society.

Towards this one aim must tend all our effort and endeavor, supported by assiduous and fervent prayers to God. For, with the assistance of Divine Grace, the destiny of the human family lies in our hands.

74Matt xvi 18

Intimate Union and Harmony Between All Good Men

Let us not permit, Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children, the children of this world to seem wiser in their generation than We, who by God's goodness are children of Light.[75] We see these men cunningly select and train resolute disciples, who spread their false doctrines daily more widely amongst men of every station and of every clime.

And when it becomes a question of attacking more vehemently the Church of Christ, we see them lay aside their internal quarrels, link up harmoniously into a single battle-line, and strive with united forces towards this common aim.

No one indeed is unaware of the many and splendid works in the social and economic field, as well as in education and religion, laboriously set in motion with indefatigable zeal by Catholics. But this admirable and self-sacrificing activity not unfrequently loses some of its effectiveness by being directed into too many different channels. Let, then, all men of good will stand united. Let all those who, under the pastors of the Church, wish to fight this good and peaceful fight of Christ, as far as talents, powers and station allow, strive to play their part in the Christian renewal of human society, which Leo XIII inaugurated in his immortal Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. Let them seek, not themselves and the things that are their own, but the things that are Jesus Christ's.[76] Let them not urge their own ideas with undue persistence, but be ready to abandon them, however admirable, should the greater common good seem to require it: that in all and above all Christ may reign and rule, to Whom be honor and glory and power forever and ever.[77]

That this happy result may be attained, Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children, We impart to you all members of the great Catholic family entrusted to Our care, but with special affection of Our heart to artisans and other workingmen engaged in manual labor, by Divine Providence committed to Us in a particular manner, and to Christian employers and masters, with paternal affection, the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome, at Saint Peter's, the fifteenth day of May, in the year 1931, the tenth of Our pontificate.

PIUS PP. XI.

75Luke xvi. 8. 76Phil. ii. 21. 77Apoc. v. 13.

Catholic Action

Encyclical Letter

(Non abbiamo bisogno)

of

His Holiness, Pope Pius XI

(Vatican Press Translation)

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ENCYCLICAL LETTER

OF

HIS HOLINESS, PIUS XI

BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE

POPE

To Our Venerable Brethren:

THE PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS AND OTHER ORDINARIES, IN PEACE AND COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE

CONCERNING

CATHOLIC ACTION

NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE CONFERENCE
1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N. W.
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1931

ENCYCLICAL
OF
POPE PIUS XI
ON
CATHOLIC ACTION

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ENCYCLICAL LETTER

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CATHOLIC ACTION

POPE PIUS XI

VENERABLE BRETHREN

HEALTH AND APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION

WE MUST needs speak to you, Venerable Brethren, about events which have recently occurred in this, Our Episcopal City of Rome, and throughout Italy, that is to say, in the very territory of which We are Primate—events which have had such a vast and such a strong repercussion everywhere, conspicuously so in all of the dioceses of Italy and throughout the Catholic World.

These occurrences are summarized in a very few and very sad words. There has been an attempt made to strike unto death that which was and that which always will be dearest to Our heart as Father and as Shepherd of Souls; and We can, We even must, subjoin "and the way in which it was done offends Us still more."

And it is in the presence of these events, and constrained by them, that We feel the necessity and the duty of turning to you, Venerable Brethren, and, in a certain manner, going in spirit to each one of you, for the purpose of fulfilling first of all a grave and an urgent duty of fraternal gratitude. And We turn to you in the second place to satisfy another duty equally grave and urgent, the duty to defend Truth and Justice in a matter which, affecting vital interests and rights of Holy Mother Church, concerns each and every one of you, Venerable Brethren, whom the

Holy Ghost has called to govern the Church in union with Ourselves. We desire, thirdly, to explain to you certain conclusions and reflections that the nature of events seems to oblige Us to accept. Fourthly, We wish to tell you of Our anxieties for the future, and finally, We invite you to share Our hopes, and to pray with Us and with the Catholic world that these hopes may be realized.

One

The interior peace—that peace which comes to any one with full and clear knowledge that one is arrayed on the side of Truth and Justice and that one is striving and suffering for these virtues—that peace which only God can give and which the world, in the same way that it cannot give, neither can it take away—that blessed and consoling peace has never left Us, thanks to Divine goodness and mercy; and We have fullest confidence that, come what may, it will never leave Us.

But the possession of this peace—and this was verified in the Heart of Our suffering Saviour and is also verified in the hearts of His faithful followers—does not prevent the torment of bitterness, as well you know, Venerable Brethren, and We also have experienced the truth of those mysterious words: "Behold in peace is my bitterness most bitter." (Isaias 38:17).

Your prompt, generous and affectionate cooperation, which still continues, Venerable Brethren; the fraternal, and filial expressions of devotion which you have uttered; and above everything else that feeling of high supernatural solidarity of purpose, that intimate union of thoughts and of feelings, of intellects and wills which your messages of affection breathe forth and radiate, have filled Our soul with an indescribable consolation and have called forth from Our heart to Our lips the words of the Psalmist: "According to the multitude of my sorrows in my heart, thy comforts have given joy to my soul," (Ps. 93:19).

For all these consolations and comforts, after God, We thank you, Venerable Brethren, you to whom We also can say as Jesus Christ said to your predecessors, the Apostles:

"And you are they who have continued with me in my temptations," (Luke, 22:28).

And in expressing Our gratitude to you, We wish also to perform the duty, most consoling to Our paternal heart, of thanking hosts of good and worthy children who, separately and collectively, as individuals and as members of various organizations and associations, and especially the associations of Catholic Action and of Catholic Youth, have sent Us so many and such affectionate tributes of devotion and sympathy, and of generous and effective correspondence with Our directions and Our desires.

It has been for Us an exquisite satisfaction to see the Catholic Action organizations of all countries, both near and distant, united about the Common Father, inspired by an unique spirit of faith, of filial sorrow and of generous impulses, expressing all their astonishment and grief in seeing Catholic Action societies persecuted and assailed here in the very centre of the Apostolic Hierarchy, in Italy, where, as in all parts of the world, Catholic Action was existing, and did not wish to exist otherwise, nor could have existed otherwise, than in accordance with its authentic and essential definition—as the participation and the collaboration of the laity with the Apostolic Hierarchy.

This was what Catholic Action societies were actually doing in strict accordance with its definition and under Our painstaking and vigilant direction and with the helpful cooperation of yourselves, Venerable Brethren.

We ask you, Venerable Brethren, to convey an expression of Our paternal appreciation to all of your and Our children in Christ who have shown themselves to be so well brought up and to be so good and so sympathetic toward the Common Father of all the faithful so as to inspire Us to exclaim: "I exceedingly abound with joy in all our tribulation." (Cor. 2:7:4).

And to you Bishops of each and every diocese in this dear Italy must go not only the expression of Our gratitude for the comforts with which you have vied with one another in giving Us by your letters, which have been arriving during the entire month just finishing, and especially by your telegrams so eloquent and so affectionate for the feast day of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul; but

there must go also an exchange of condolences for that which each one of you has suffered in seeing a devastating storm sweep suddenly down on the spiritual garden of souls which the Holy Ghost has entrusted to your care, and injure and uproot the plants and the tender flowers which grow in God's garden and which you had with so much diligence been carefully nurturing and cultivating. Your hearts, Venerable Brethren, have immediately turned to Our own, to suffer with Us in our afflictions, and you perceived that Our heart was as a centre in which all of your suffering hearts met and converged and joined. You have manifested this sentiment to Us in clear, unmistakable and affectionate ways, and for these evidences We thank you all, from the depths of Our heart. Particularly appreciative are We of the unanimous and most satisfactory and convincing proofs which you have brought to Us concerning Italian Catholic Action societies, and particularly regarding Catholic Youth associations, affording demonstrations that these organizations have remained docile and faithful to your and to Our instructions in refraining absolutely from any and every kind of political party activity. And together with you, We express Our thanks to all your priests, members of religious communities and the laity, who have labored with you with such magnificent zeal, such exemplary faith and such Christian piety. And in a special way We thank your Catholic associations, chiefly the organizations of the young, down through all their groups even to the smallest boys and girls, for the smaller they are the dearer they are and it is in their prayers that We confidently repose Our trust.

You have understood well, Venerable Brethren, that Our heart was and is with you, with each one of you, with you and for you in sufferings, with you and for you in prayers, beseeching God in His infinite mercy to come to Our assistance, and from this great evil which the ancient enemy of good has unloosed, to draw new blessings and great blessings.

Two

Having satisfied the debt of gratitude for the comforts which We have received in our affliction, We must now

satisfy also that obligation which Our apostolic ministry imposes on Us as a debt to Truth and Justice.

Already on several occasions, Venerable Brethren, in the most solemn and explicit manner and assuming entire responsibility for what We were saying, we have protested against the campaign of false and unjust accusations which preceded the disbanding of the associations of the young people and of the university students affiliated with Catholic Action. It was a disbanding which was carried out in a way and with the use of tactics which would give the impression that action was being taken against a vast and dangerous organization of criminals. And the proceedings were directed against young men and young women who are certainly some of the best among the good and concerning whom We are happy and paternally proud to pay them tribute still once more. It is noteworthy that even among the officers of the law charged to carry out these orders of suppression, there were many who were ill at ease and showed by their expressions and courtesies that they were almost asking pardon for doing that which they had been commanded. We have appreciated the delicate feelings of these officers, and We have reserved for them a special blessing.

However, in sad contrast to the manner of acting of these officials, there were how many acts of mistreatment and of violence, extending even to the striking of blows and the drawing of blood! How many insults in the press, how many injurious words and acts against things and persons, not excluding Ourself, preceded, accompanied and followed the carrying into effect of this lightning-like police order which very frequently, either through ignorance or malicious zeal, was extended to include associations and organizations not contemplated in the orders of the superiors, such as the oratories of the little ones and the sodalities of the Children of Mary. And all of this sad accompaniment of irreverences and of violences took place in the presence of and with the participation of members of a political party some of whom were in uniform, and was carried into effect with such a unison of action throughout all Italy and with such a passive acquiescence on the part of the civil authorities and the police as to

make one necessarily think of some uniform directions received from some high authority. It is very easy to admit, and it was also equally easy to have foreseen, that the limits of these directions could and would have almost necessarily been exceeded. We have been obliged to refer to these sorrowful and painful occurrences because there has been an attempt made to have the public and the world at large believe that the disbanding of these associations so dear to Us took place without any troubles and almost as if it were quite a normal occurrence.

But there have been other attacks on truth and justice on a larger scale. Of all the inventions, falsehoods and real calumnies diffused by the hostile press of the party, which is the only press which is free to say and to dare to say anything and is often ordered, or almost ordered, what it must say, there was certainly a large portion of these fabrications, if not all of them, summarized in a message which was cautiously characterized as unofficial and yet which was administered to the general public with the most powerful means of diffusion existing at present. The history of documents prepared not in the service of Truth but in offense of Truth and Justice is a long and sad story. But We must say, with a certain deep dismay, that in Our many years of active life as a librarian, rarely have We seen an article so tendentious and so contrary to Truth and Justice in its references to this Holy See, to Italian Catholic Action, and particularly to the associations so harshly treated. If We should be silent, if We should not contradict these things—that is to say, if We should permit them to be believed—We would be too much more unworthy than We already are to occupy this august Apostolic Chair. We should be unworthy of the filial and generous devotion which has always consoled Us and now more than ever consoles Us, that devotion of Our dear children of Catholic Action, and especially of those dear sons and dear daughters—and thanks be to God they are so numerous—who because of religious loyalty to Our invitations and directions, have suffered so much and are still suffering, thereby the more greatly honoring the school in which they have been reared and honoring also their Divine Master and His

unworthy Vicar as they have so gloriously demonstrated by their Christian conduct even in the face of threats and violence so that it is clear on what side real dignity of character, true strength of mind, real courage and education, are displayed.

We shall try to be as brief as possible in correcting the careless assertions of the above-mentioned message—and We say "careless" in order not to be obliged to say "bold," because it could be imagined that the majority of the public would have no possibility of controlling its accuracy.

We shall be brief also because many times, especially recently, We have spoken on questions that now come up again and Our words have reached you, Venerable Brethren, and through you they have reached also Our dear children in Jesus Christ as We trust also Our words will reach them in this present letter.

Among other things the above-mentioned message stated was that the revelations of the hostile press of the party had been almost completely confirmed, at least in substance, and confirmed no less than by the *Osservatore Romano*. The truth is that the *Osservatore Romano* has, time and time again, demonstrated that the so-called revelations were either actual fabrications or at least false in the interpretation given to facts. It is sufficient to read without bad faith and with a modest capacity to understand.

The message further stated that it was ridiculous to try to make the Holy See appear as a victim in a country where thousands of travelers could give testimony of the respect shown toward priests, prelates, the Church and religious functions. Yes, Venerable Brethren, the attempt unfortunately would be ridiculous, just as it would be ridiculous to break through an open door; because, unfortunately, thousands of visitors who are always present in Italy and in Rome have observed the irreverences, oftentimes of an impious and blasphemous character and the acts of violence and vandalism committed against places, things and persons throughout the country and in Our very Episcopal City, and which have been re-

peatedly deplored by Us after We had had sure and precise information about them.

The message denounces the "black ingratitude" of the priests who are against the party which has been (so the message says) the guarantee of religious liberty throughout all Italy. The clergy, and the bishops and this Holy See have never failed to acknowledge everything that has been done during all these years for the benefit and advantage of religion, and they have on many occasions expressed their genuine and sincere appreciation. But We and the bishops and the clergy and all the faithful—in fact, all citizens desirous of peace and order—have worried and suffered and are worrying and suffering in the presence of a systematic campaign all too quickly begun against the most reasonable and precious liberties of religion and of consciences, such as were the attacks on Catholic Action and its different associations, especially those of the young—attacks which had their culmination in the police measures taken against these organizations and in the manner to which We have already alluded, attacks and measures such as to lead one seriously to doubt that the former benevolences and favors were actuated by a sincere love and zeal for religion, and rather incline to the opinion that they were due to pure calculation and with the intention of solidifying power. And if the question of ingratitude should be considered, it should be rather that ingratitude used toward the Holy See by a party and by a regime that, in the opinion of the whole world, from the fact of establishing friendly relations with the Holy See, both in the country and outside of it, gained a prestige and a credit which some people in Italy and outside of it considered excessive as they deemed the favor on Our part too great and the truth and confidence which We reposed too full.

The police measures having been put into effect with their accompaniment and consequence of acts of violence and of irreverence—acts which were unfortunately acquiesced in and connived at by the authorities of public order—We suspended the mission of our Cardinal Legate to the centenary celebration in Padua, and the festive processions in Rome and in Italy. Such a disposition was

patently within Our competence, and We saw in this measure such grave and urgent reasons for so proceeding that it became a duty, although We were aware that this action would require heavy sacrifices on the part of the good people and perhaps a greater pain to Ourself than to any other. But how could the usual joyful and solemn festivals be held in the midst of such grief and sorrow as that which had struck the paternal heart of the common Father of all the faithful and the maternal heart of Holy Mother Church, in Rome, in Italy, in all the catholic world, in fact, as became immediately demonstrated by the universal and truly world-wide participation that occurred with you at the head, Venerable Brethren, to assure Us of the general sadness and sympathy. O, how could We not fear for the respect and the safety of persons and of things most sacred, when We were obliged to take into consideration the attitude of public authorities and officers of the law in the presence of so many irreverent and violent acts! Wherever news of Our decisions arrived, the good priests and people had the identical ideas and the same sentiments, and wherever they were not intimidated, threatened or worse, they gave magnificent—and for Us most consoling—proofs of loyalty and grief by substituting for the *festina* observances holy hours of prayer, adoration and of reparation in union with the sorrowing heart of the Holy Father and for his intention and in great gatherings of the people.

We know how things proceeded in those places where Our instruction did not, "because of the action of the authorities," as the message reveals, arrive in time. Those selfsame authorities of government and of party had already assisted, or were about to assist, silently and inactively, in demonstrations, definitely anti-Catholic and decidedly anti-religious, then being held—this the message does not state. The message does presume to say, however, that there were local ecclesiastical authorities who considered themselves in a position not to pay any attention to Our prohibition. We do not know of any single local ecclesiastical authority who deserves such an insult and such an offence. We do know, however, and We strongly deplore, the impositions and the threats

and the acts of force used, or permitted to be used, against local ecclesiastical authorities. We know of impious parodies of sacred processions, all of which were permitted to take place to the profound sorrow of the faithful and the great amazement of all citizens who desire peace and order, who were obliged to witness peace and order undefended, and even worse than undefended, by those very persons who have both the solemn duty and vital interest to defend them.

The message calls attention to an argument that has been used many times, in drawing a contrast between the situation in Italy and in other countries where the Church is really persecuted and against which countries there have never been heard words spoken as strong as the words pronounced against Italy, where religion has been restored. We have already said that We conserve, and We shall conserve, a remembrance and an enduring gratitude for what has been done in Italy for the welfare of religion, even if contemporaneously a not less and perhaps greater benefit has accrued therefrom to the party and to the regime. We have stated and We have repeated that it is not necessary (and would indeed oftentimes be decidedly injurious to the ends desired) that everything should be heard and known about that which We and this Holy See, through Our representatives and through Our brothers in the Episcopacy, have to say and have to remonstrate wherever the interests of religion demand it, and in the measure which, in Our judgment, the situation indicates, especially in those places where the Church is really persecuted.

And it was with a grief inexpressible that We saw a real and a true persecution break out in this Our Italy and in this very city of Rome against that which the Church and its head have characterized as most precious and dear to them from the standpoint of liberty and of right, liberty and right that are the heritage of souls and especially of the souls of the young entrusted to the Church in a particular way by the Divine Creator and Redeemer.

As is well known, We have repeatedly and solemnly affirmed and protested that Catholic Action, both from its very nature and essence (the participation and the

collaboration of the laity with the Apostolic Hierarchy) and by Our precise and categorical directions and dispositions, is outside and above every political party. We have also affirmed and protested that We are sure that in Italy Our directions and dispositions have been faithfully obeyed and followed. The message makes the pronouncement that the assertion that Catholic Action did not have a true political character is absolutely false. We wish to call attention to the discourtesy of such a statement; also, because of the motives which the message gives to justify the statement, demonstrate completely the untruth and the lightness of the remark so that We would term it ridiculous if the case were not so sad. For the reason given, that Catholic Action is a political party, is because Catholic Action has banners, badges, identification cards and all the other external forms of a political party, just as if banners, badges and identification cards and other similar external appurtenances were not today the most common thing in every country of the world for the most varied kind of associations and activities which have nothing, and wish to have nothing, in common with politics, such as, for example, sports and professional organizations, civil and military clubs, commercial and industrial groups, school children even organized exclusively in a religious way, as little ones who belong to the Crusaders of the Blessed Sacrament. The message itself reveals all the weakness and the futility of this alleged motive, and almost as if hastening to make reparations, it adds three other reasons. The first reason is that the heads of Catholic Action were almost to a man members or heads of the Popular Party, which was one of the strongest opponents of Fascism. This accusation has been launched many times against Catholic Action, but always in a generic manner and without specifying any names. Many times We have asked for precise data and for names, but without result. Only a short time before the police measures taken against Catholic Action, and in evident preparation for them, the hostile press, evidently having access to the police reports, published a series of alleged facts and names: the pretended revelations which are referred to in the beginning of the message and which the *Osserva-*

tore Romano duly denied and corrected, and did not confirm as the message itself asserted it did. It did thereby mystify and deceive the general public.

In regard to Ourselves, Venerable Brethren, in addition to the information which We had already available and from personal investigations had already made, We have considered that it was Our additional duty to secure new information and make new investigations, and behold, Venerable Brethren, the positive results. First of all, We have found out that while the Popular Party was still in existence and before the new party has asserted itself, through directions given in 1919 it was decreed that no one who had occupied a position of responsibility in the Popular Party could contemporaneously be an officer in Catholic Action. We also found out, Venerable Brethren, that the cases of local ex-directors of the Popular Party who subsequently became local directors in the Catholic Action consist of four: we say four, and this small number must be considered in the light of the facts that there are 250 diocesan committees, 4,000 sections of Catholic Action, and more than 5,000 circles of Catholic youths. And We must add that in the four above-cited instances, the individuals concerned have never given any occasion for dispute and some of them are actually sympathizers with and well regarded by the regime and by the party.

And We do not wish to omit mentioning another guarantee that Catholic Action will abstain from politics, a reason which you already well know, Venerable Brethren, Bishops in Italy, and that is that Catholic Action has been, is, and will always be, under the dependence of the Episcopate, under your direction, under you who have always assigned ecclesiastical assistants and have nominated the presidents of the diocesan committees. Whence it is clear that in trusting and recommending to you, Venerable Bishops, these associations which have been assailed, We have not ordered and disposed anything substantially new. When the Popular Party was dissolved and passed out of existence, those who formerly belonged to Catholic Action continued to belong to Catholic Action, and they submitted themselves with perfect discipline to the funda-

mental law of Catholic Action, that is, abstention from every political activity, and so did all those who on that occasion asked to be received as members. And with what justice and charity could these people have been expelled or not admitted to Catholic Action when they possessed the necessary qualifications required by the constitution? The regime and the party which seemed to attribute such a fearful and feared strength to those who belonged to the Popular Party for particular reasons should show themselves grateful to Catholic Action, which removed them precisely from that sphere and required them to make a formal pledge not to carry out any political activities, to limit themselves to religious ones. We cannot—We, Church, religious, faithful Catholics (and not alone We)—We cannot be grateful to one who, after putting out of existence socialism and anti-religious organizations (Our enemies and not alone Ours), has permitted them to be so generally readmitted, as all see and deplore, and has made them even more strong and dangerous inasmuch as they are now hidden and also protected by their new uniform. There has been frequent mention made of infractions of the pledge taken. We have always asked names and concrete facts, always ready to intervene and to take indicated measures. There has never been any reply to Our request.

The message declares that Catholic Action was organized in a political way and that its form of organization had nothing to do with "religious education and propagation of the faith." Leaving aside the unlearned and confused manner in which the purposes of Catholic Action are described, all those who know and live the life of today realize that there is no sort of an initiative or any activity, from the more spiritual and scientific bodies to the more material and mechanical ones, that has not the necessity of organization and of organized action. And the fact that there is an organization does not mean that the end and purpose of the organization is political.

"However," continues the message, "the strongest argument that can be used as justification for the destruction of the Catholic circles of youth is the defense of the state, which is no more than the simple duty of every

government." There is no doubt of the solemnity and the vital importance of such a duty and of such a right, We add, since We hold, and We wish at all costs to practice with all honest and reasonable individuals, that the first right is to do one's own duty.

But all the receivers and readers of the message would have smiled with incredulity or wondered greatly if the message had added what is true, namely that of the Catholic circles of the young which were objects of the measure, 10,000 were—rather, actually are—composed of girls and young women with a total membership of about 500,000. Who can see a serious danger and a real threat against the security of the state in this question? And it must be considered that only 220,000 are inscribed as "effective members." More than 100,000 are little "aspirants;" more than 150,000, still smaller children, are called "benjamins."

There still remain the circles of the Catholic young men, that same Catholic youth which, in the publications of the youth of the party and in the circular letters of the so-called leaders of the party, are represented and held up to ridicule and to scorn (with what sense of pedagogical responsibility, to say only this, anyone may see) as an assembly of "rabbits" and capable only to carry candles and to recite rosaries in sacred processions. And this is perhaps the reason that they have been in these recent days so many times, and with such cowardice, assailed and maltreated even to the shedding of blood, and left undefended by those who could and should protect and defend them, if for no other reason than, being harmless and peaceful, they have been assailed by individuals who frequently bore arms.

If here is the strongest argument for the attempted "destruction" (the word does not leave any doubt about the intentions) of the heroic and noble associations of young men of Catholic Action, you will see, Venerable Brethren, that We could and should congratulate Ourselves on Our position, since the incredible absurdity of this argument is so clearly evident, but evidently We are obliged to repeat that "Iniquity hath lied to itself" (Ps. 26:12), and that the strongest argument for the desired

destruction must be sought in another field: the battle that is now being fought is not political but moral and religious, exquisitely moral and religious.

It is necessary to close one's eyes to this truth in order to find politics where there is nothing but religion and morals, to conclude, as does the message, that an absurd situation had been created by a strong organization at the orders of a "foreign" power, the "Vatican," a thing that no government in this world would have permitted.

There have been sequestered *en masse* the documents of all the seats of Catholic Action, and correspondence that might be suspected to have some relation to the associations affected, and even with those not affected, such as the oratories, continues to be intercepted and sequestered. Tell Us, therefore, tell the country, tell the world—what documents there are and how many of them there are that treat of politics planned and directed by Catholic Action with such peril to the state. We dare to say that none of such will be found, unless they are read and interpreted in accordance with preconceived and unfair ideas, which are contradicted fully by facts and by evidence and by numberless proofs and witnesses.

When, and if there are any genuine documents found, ones that are worthy of consideration, We shall be the first to recognize them and to take them into consideration. But who would wish, for example, to charge a person with political activities and political actions dangerous to the state, for making some complaint or deploring the harsh treatment inflicted so many times and in so many places on the Catholic Action associations, even previous to the time of these latest outbreaks? Instead, there will be found among the sequestered documents proofs and evidences literally numberless of the profound and consistent religious character and of the religious activity of all Catholic Action, and particularly so of the associations of the young and of the university students. It will be sufficient to know and to read, as We Ourselves have done numberless times, the programs, the reports, the proceedings of congresses, of weeks of religious study and of prayer, of spiritual exercises and the frequenting of the Sacraments practiced and promoted, of conferences in

explanation of religion, of studies, of catechetical activities, of cooperation and initiatives of true and pure Christian charity in conferences of St. Vincent de Paul and in many other ways, and in zealous work for missionaries.

And in the presence of such facts and such documentation, therefore, with an eye and a hand on the reality of things, as We have always said, We still say that to accuse the Italian Catholic Action of engaging in politics is a real and true calumny. The facts have demonstrated what was the real target aimed at when Catholic Action was struck, and what was the thing that was being prepared. Only at rare times has it occurred that the fable of the wolf and the lamb has been exemplified so strikingly, and history will not do else but recall this instance.

We, certain to the point of having evidence of restricting ourselves to that which concerns religion, have not been able ever to believe that We could be considered a "foreign power," especially by Catholics and by Italian Catholics. And thanks to this apostolic power which is now entrusted by God to Us, unworthy though We be, thanks to this power, the good Catholics of all the world consider Rome as the second country of each and every one of them. And it is not so long ago that a statesman who will remain certainly among the world's most celebrated, a man neither a Catholic nor a friend of Catholicism, in a crowded political meeting said that he could not consider as a power foreign to Germany that authority which twenty million Germans obeyed.

To say, then, that no government of the world would have permitted the situation created in Italy by the existence of Catholic Action to have continued, it is necessary absolutely to ignore and to forget that in all other states of the world, as far as China, Catholic Action exists and lives and the organizations frequently resemble, even to the smallest details, the Italian Catholic Action, and in some countries the organization is more highly developed than in Italy. In no state of the world has Catholic Action ever been considered as a danger to the state; in no state of the world has Catholic Action been so hatefully treated, so truly persecuted (we do not see what other word conforms to the reality of the truth of the situation)

as in this Our Italy and in this Our Episcopal seat of Rome.

And thus exists this truly absurd situation, not by Us created but against Us. We have assumed a heavy and tedious task. But it has seemed to Us the definite duty of charity and one that is also required by paternal justice, and in this spirit We have fulfilled Our purpose of putting in their true light various facts and truths that some children of Ours had, perhaps not with complete knowledge, distorted and placed in a false light, causing harm to other children of Ours.

Three

There is one consideration and conclusion. From that which we have been explaining, and still more from the events themselves as they have been evolving, it is clear that these accusations—of political activity by Catholic Action, manifest or disguised hostility of some of its partisans against the regime and the party, as well as its being also the eventual refuge and haven of the refugees who up to the present hostility have been spared through the banner of Catholic Action (See communication from the Directors, June 4, 1931)—it is clear that all these accusations are nothing but a pretext or a cumulation of pretexts.

We dare to say that even Catholic Action itself is only a pretext. That which was desired and that which was attempted was to tear away from the Catholic Action society, and through this process to tear away from the Church, the young, and all the young. So very true is this that, after having talked so much about Catholic Action, aim was taken only at the associations of the young, nor were these attacks limited to associations of the young affiliated with Catholic Action. Then afterward, they were extended and broadened so that the tumultuous measure embraced associations of a simply devotional character and works of pure piety and of a primary catechetical nature, such as sodalities of the Children of Mary and oratories. So great were the exaggerations that on some occasions the grossness of the errors was acknowledged.

This essential point is very largely confirmed from various sources. It is confirmed first of all by many antecedent statements made by personalities more or less responsible, and also by persons representative of the regime and of the party, and which have had their complete commentary and definite confirmation by the latest events.

This confirmation is made all the more explicit and categorical—We were almost about to say solemn and violent—by the one who not only represents all, but who can do all and confirms it in official or quasi-official publications dedicated to the young, in interviews and articles for foreign publication before that in this country, and also, up to this very moment, by messages and communications to representatives of the press.

Another reflection and conclusion immediately and inevitably presents itself. There has been heretofore no attention paid to Our oft-repeated assurances and Our protest. There has been no attention paid to your protests and assurances. Venerable Brethren, about the nature and about the real, true character of Catholic Action and of the sacred and inviolable rights of souls and of the Church that in Catholic Action are represented and personified.

We state, Venerable Brethren, the sacred and inviolable rights of the soul and of the Church, and this is the reflection and conclusion that more than any other concerns Us, as it is, than any other, more grave. Time and time again, as is well known, We have expressed Our thoughts—or, better, the thoughts of the Holy Church—on these important and essential matters, and it is not to you, Venerable Brethren, faithful masters in Israel, that it is necessary to say more. But We must add something for the benefit of those dear people committed to your care and whom as shepherds of souls, you nourish and govern by Divine mandate and who nowadays would almost never be able, save for you, to know the thoughts of the Common Father of their souls. We said sacred and inviolable rights of souls and of the Church because the matter concerns the right of souls to procure for themselves the greatest spiritual good according to the teaching and

under the formation work of the Church, of such a teaching and of such an unique work that it is constituted by Divine mandate in this supernatural order, established in the Blood of God the Redeemer, necessary and obligatory to all in order to participate in the Divine Redemption. It concerns the right of souls so formed to bring the treasures of the Redemption to other souls, thus participating in the activities of the Apostolic Hierarchy.

And in consideration of this double right of souls, We are, as We stated above, happy and proud to wage the good fight for the liberty of consciences, not indeed (as someone, perhaps inadvertently, has quoted Us as saying) for the liberty of conscience which is an equivocal expression too often distorted to mean the absolute independence of conscience, which is absurd in a soul created and redeemed by God.

Besides, there is involved another right of the Church, equally inviolable, to fulfill the imperative Divine commission entrusted to her by her Divine Founder, to bring to souls—to bring to every soul—all the treasures of truth and of good, doctrinal and practical, which He Himself brought to the world. "Going therefore, teach ye all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matt. 28: 19-20).

And of what great importance are the first years and the age of youth in putting into effect the universal and complete mandate, is demonstrated by the Divine Master Himself, the Creator and the Redeemer of souls, by His example and by these particularly memorable words which are also particularly formidable: "Suffer the little children and forbid them not to come to me: for the kingdom of Heaven is for such." (Matt. 19: 14). Guard and watch over "those little ones that believe in Me (Matt. 18: 6), whose is the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 19: 14), whose angels in heaven always see the face of My Father Who is in heaven (Matt. 18: 10). Woe to him that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in Me. (Matt. 18: 6).

And here We find Ourselves in the presence of a contract between authentic affirmations on the one hand and not less authentic facts on the other hand, which reveal,

without the slightest possibility of doubt, the proposal, already in great part actually put into effect, to monopolize completely the young, from the tenderest years up to manhood and womanhood, and all for the exclusive advantage of a party, of a regime based on ideology which clearly resolves itself into a true and real pagan worship of the state, which is no less in contrast with the natural rights of the family than it is in contradiction to the supernatural rights of the Church. To propose and promote such a monopoly, to persecute for this reason Catholic Action, as has been done for some time more or less openly or under cover, to reach this end by striking Catholic Action in the way that has recently occurred, is truly and actually to prevent children from going to Jesus Christ, since it impedes them from going to His Church and even arrives at the point of snatching them with violence from the bosom of both, because where the Church is, there is Jesus Christ.

The Church of Jesus Christ has never contested the rights and the duties of the state concerning the education of its citizens and We Ourselves have recalled and proclaimed them in Our recent Encyclical Letter on the Christian Education of Youth; rights and duties which are unchallengeable as long as they remain within the limits of the state's proper competency, a competency which in its turn is clearly indicated and determined by the missions of the state, missions certainly not only bodily and material, but missions that by the very necessity of their character are contained within the limits of the natural, the earthly and the temporary.

The universal divine mandate with which the Church of Jesus Christ has been by Jesus Christ Himself incommunicably and absolutely commissioned to concern herself with eternity, with heaven and with the supernatural—with that order of things which, on one side, it is of the strictest obligation for every rational creature to consider and to which, on the other side, it is necessary by the very nature of things to subordinate and coordinate the remainder.

The Church of Jesus Christ is certainly acting within the limits of its mandate, not only when it puts into souls the first indispensable beginnings and elements of super-

natural life, but also when it assists and encourages the growth of this supernatural life according to the opportunities and the capacities of persons and in the ways and by the means which, in the Church's judgment, seem suitable also with the purpose of preparing capable and efficient collaborators with the apostolic Hierarchy and clergy. It is Jesus Christ Himself Who made the solemn declaration that He came precisely that souls might have not only some beginning or some element of supernatural life, but that they might have it in greater abundance. "I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly." (John 10: 10).

It was Jesus Christ Himself who laid the first foundations of Catholic Action. It was Christ Himself Who, choosing and educating the Apostles and Disciples as collaborators in His Divine Apostolate, gave an example which at once was followed by the first holy Apostles, as the Sacred Text itself substantiates.

It is, consequently, an unjustified pretense and, indeed, irreconcilable with the name and the profession of being a Catholic, to come to teach the Church and its Head what is sufficient and what must be sufficient for the education and Christian formation of souls and to enunciate and promote in society, chiefly for the young, the principles of faith and of their full efficiency in life. To the unjustifiable presumption must be added also very clear evidence of the absolute incompetence and complete ignorance of the matters under discussion. Recent events must have opened the eyes of all, since they have demonstrated with evidence that which has come to pass within a few years, not in fact saving, but rather disrupting and destroying the true religious sentiment of Christian and civil education.

You know, Venerable Brethren, Bishops of Italy, from your pastoral experience, that it is a grave and destructive error to believe and to make believe that the work of the Church done by Catholic Action and through Catholic Action is substituted and made superfluous by the religious instruction in the schools and on ecclesiastical assistance of the associations of youth of the party and of the regime. Both are certainly necessary. Without

them the schools and the associations would inevitably and quickly become, by logical and psychological necessity, pagan things. Necessary, therefore, they are, but they are not sufficient. As a matter of fact, with such religious instructions and such ecclesiastical assistance the Church of Jesus Christ can develop only a minimum of her spiritual and supernatural effectiveness and this minimum amid surroundings and in an environment which does not depend on the Church, disturbed and worried by many other scholastic matters and by many other exercises, subject to immediate superiors often little or not at all favorably disposed and occasionally exercising by the example of their lives an influence contrary to their words.

We have said that recent events have proved beyond the shadow of doubt that a few years have been sufficient not to save but to cause to be lost and to be destroyed the true religious sentiment. We do not say alone of Christian, but even of moral and of civil education.

We have seen, in fact, in action a species of religion which rebels against the directions of higher religious authorities, and imposes or encourages the non-observance of these directions—an attitude of religion which is persecution and attempted destruction of that which the supreme head of the religion notably most appreciates and cherishes; a religious sentiment that transcends, and permits others to indulge in insulting words and actions against the person of the Father of all the faithful, even to cry out "Down with the Pope and death to him." This is real teaching of parricide! It is a semblance of religion which cannot in any way be reconciled with the Catholic doctrine and practice, but is rather something which can be considered contrary to both. The contradiction is most grave in itself and most destructive in its effects when it not only consists of external action perpetrated and carried into effect, but also when there are principles and maxims proclaimed as fundamental and constituting a program.

A conception of the state which makes the young generations belong entirely to it without any exception from the tenderest years up to adult life cannot be recon-

ciled by a Catholic with the Catholic doctrine nor can it be reconciled with the natural right of the family. It is not possible for a Catholic to reconcile with Catholic doctrine the pretense that the Church and the Pope must limit themselves to the external practices of religion, such as Mass and the Sacraments, and then to say that the rest of education belongs to the state.

The erroneous and false doctrines and maxims that We have, up to the present, already pointed out and deplored occurred many times during these last few years, and, as is well known, We have never, with God's help, done any less than Our Apostolic duty in indicating and answering them with the just claims of the genuine Catholic doctrine and with the enunciation of the inviolable rights of the Church of Jesus Christ and of the souls redeemed by His precious blood.

But notwithstanding the judgments and the expectations and the suggestions that have come to us from many sources worthy of the greatest consideration, We have always restrained formal and explicit condemnations, and We have even gone so far as to believe possible and to favor the compatibility of cooperations that to others seemed inadmissable. We have done this because We were thinking and desiring that there would remain always the possibility, or at least doubt, that We had to deal with assertions and exaggerated actions which were sporadic and with elements which were not sufficiently representative, in a word, with assertions and axioms which referred in their censurable parts rather to the persons and to the circumstances than, strictly speaking, to a part of a program. The latest events and the assertions that preceded these events and accompanied them, and the comment made, take away from Us the desired possibility and so we must say that one is not a Catholic except through Baptism and in name, in contrast with the obligations of the name of Catholic and with the Baptismal promises—who adopts and develops a program that makes his doctrines and maxims so opposed to the rights of the Church of Jesus Christ and of souls, one who misunderstands, combats and persecutes Catholic Action

which, as is universally known, the Church and its Head regard as very dear and precious.

You ask Us, Venerable Brethren, in the view of what has taken place, what is to be thought about the formula of an oath which even little boys and girls are obliged to take about executing orders without discussion, from an authority which, as we have seen and experienced, can give orders against all truth and justice and in disregard of the rights of the Church and its souls, which are already by their very nature, sacred and inviolable, and to have them swear to serve with all their strength, even to the shedding of blood, the cause of a revolution that snatches the youth from the Church and from Jesus Christ and which educates its own young forces to hatred, to deeds of violence, and to irreverence, not excluding the person of the Pope himself, as the latest facts have very evidently demonstrated. When you place the question in such terms the answer from the Catholic point of view and also from a human point of view is, inevitably, only one, and We, Venerable Brethren, do not wish to do otherwise than to confirm the answer which you already have given: such an oath as it stands is illicit.

Four

And behold Us now in the throes of great anxieties which We know are also yours, Venerable Brethren, especially you who are Bishops in Italy. We are preoccupied, first of all, by the fact that so many of Our children, also young boys and girls, are inscribed and have taken membership with that oath. We deeply pity so many consciences tortured by doubts (torments and doubts of whose existence We have incontrovertible evidence) precisely because of that oath as it was interpreted, especially after the recent occurrences. Realizing the many difficulties of the present times and knowing that membership in the party and the oath are for countless persons a necessary condition for their career, for bread, for life itself, We have sought to find a way which would restore tranquillity to these consciences, reducing to the least possible the external difficulties of the situation, and it seems to Us that such a means for those who have already received

the membership card would be to make for themselves before God, in their own consciences, the reservation such as "Safeguarding the laws of God and of the Church," or "In accordance with the duties of a good Christian," with the firm proposal to declare also externally such a reservation if the need of it might arise.

There, even from whence come these dispositions and these orders We would wish also that Our prayer would arrive, the prayer of a Father that wishes to tranquilize the consciences of so many of his sons in Jesus Christ, and that is that the same reservation be introduced into the form of the oath, unless it might be wished to do some thing even better, far better, and this is to omit the oath altogether, since it is always an act of religion and certainly has no appropriate place in taking membership in a political party.

We have tried to speak with calm and with serenity, and also with all clarity. However, We cannot be otherwise than concerned that We be well understood, We do not say by you, Venerable Brethren, always and now more than ever so united to Us in thoughts and in sentiments, but by every one.

With everything that We have said up to the present, We have not said that We wished to condemn the party as such. We have intended to point out and to condemn that much in the program and in the action of the party which We have seen and have understood to be contrary to Catholic doctrine and the Catholic practice and therefore irreconcilable with the name and with the profession of Catholics. And in doing this, We have fulfilled a precious duty of Our Episcopal ministry toward Our dear sons who are members of the party, so that they can rest tranquil with the proper consciences of Catholics.

We believe, then, that We have thus at the same time accomplished a good work for the party itself, because what interest and success can the party have in a Catholic country like Italy in maintaining in its program ideas and maxims and practices which cannot be reconciled with a Catholic conscience? The conscience of peoples, as that of individuals, finishes always by returning to

itself and seeking ways that for a longer or shorter period of time they may have lost from view or have abandoned.

And lest it be alleged that Italy is Catholic but anti-clerical, We intend for the sake of caution, to say something in this regard. You, Venerable Brethren, who in the great and small dioceses live in continuous contact with the good population of all the country, you know and you see every day how they, without pretending or without misleading, are completely foreign to any anti-clerical spirit.

It is known by all who are at all familiar with the history of the country that anti-clericalism has had in Italy the importance and the strength which Masonry and Liberalism generated here. In our days, when the unanimous enthusiasm over the Lateran Treaty united and inspired with joy all the country as never before, it would not have been possible for anti-clericalism to reassert itself if it had not been provoked and encouraged on the vigil of the signing of the Treaty. During the latest occurrences, directions and orders have, at will, made it enter into action and made it cease action, as all have been able to see and to verify. And it is beyond any doubt that it would be sufficient and will always be sufficient, to hold it in its proper place, to have a hundredth or a thousandth part of the measures applied which so long have molested Catholic Action and which culminated recently in that proceeding about which now all the world knows.

However, other and very grave worries about the future concern us. It was affirmed, in a meeting which was most official and most solemn—a meeting which was held immediately after these last acts which were for us and for the Catholics of all Italy and of all the world so sad and depressing—it was professed that there was "an unchanged respect toward the Catholic religion, its Supreme Head." "An unchanged respect"—therefore that same respect without variation which We have already experienced; therefore that respect which had its expression in so many and so vastly extensive, hateful police measures, prepared in deep silence, as a betrayal, and executed with lightning-like suddenness on the very vigil of Our birthday, an occasion of many acts of kindness

and of courtesy toward Us on the part of the Catholic world and also of the non-Catholic world; therefore that same respect that excels in violences and in irreverences permitted to be perpetrated without disturbance.

For what, therefore, can we hope? Or, better, what things must We not expect? There has been someone who has asked if such a strange method of speaking and of writing in such circumstances, in such proximity to such occurrences, was completely free from irony, which would be a really sad irony, which for Our Own part We wish to exclude. In the same context of the communication, and in immediate relation to the "unchanged respect" (therefore, from the same addresses) there is an insinuation about "refuges" and "protections" given to the still remaining opponents of the party, and the directors of the 9,000 groups of Fascists in Italy are ordered to direct their attention to this situation. More than one of you has already experienced giving Us also the sad information about the effect of these remarks and these insinuations and these orders, for there occurred a new outbreak of hateful surveillance, of denunciations, of intimidations.

How, therefore, can We prepare for the future? What can We, and must We, not expect (for We do not fear, since the fear of God expels the fear of man) if, as We have reasons to believe, it is determined not to permit Our Catholic Youth to reunite, even silently, unless the directors are threatened with bitter punishment.

What new thing, therefore, We ask Ourselves, does the future prepare and threaten?

Five

It is actually to this extreme of doubts and of provisions to which men have reduced Us, that every worry vanishes, disappears, and Our spirit opens to the most confident and consoling hopes, because the future is in the hands of God and God is with Us, and "If God be for us, who is against us?" (Rom. 8: 31).

A sign and a sensible proof of the assistance and of the Divine favor We already see and feel in your helpfulness and cooperation, Venerable Brethren. If We have been

well informed, it has been said recently that now Catholic Action is in the hands of the Bishops and there is nothing more to fear. And up to this point, the statement is good—very good—except for that phrase "nothing more," as if to say that before there was something to fear, and except also that word "now," as if before, and from the beginning, Catholic Action was not always essentially diocesan and dependent on the Bishops (as We have above pointed out), and also for this; principally for this, We have always nourished the most certain confidence that Our directions were observed. For this, after the promised unfailing Divine assistance, We remain, and We shall remain, with the most serene confidence, even if tribulation—let us say the exact word, even if persecution—shall continue and intensify.

We know that you are, and you know yourselves that you are, Our Brethren in the Episcopacy and in the Apostolate. We know, and you know, too, Venerable Brethren, that you are the successors of those Apostles that St. Paul called, with words of supreme sublimity, the "Glory of Christ." (II Cor. 8:23).

You Bishops of Italy know that no mortal man—not even the head of a state or of a government—but the Holy Ghost—has placed you there in places which Peter assigned to you to rule the Church of God. These and so many other holy and sublime things that concern you, Venerable Brethren, are evidently ignored or forgotten by him who thinks of you and calls you, Bishops of Italy, "Officials of the State," from which the very formula of the oath, which it is necessary for you to make to the sovereign, clearly distinguishes and separates you, for the oath especially states, "as is convenient for a Catholic bishop."

Great, therefore, and truly a measureless reason for hoping for the best, is the immense chorus of prayers that the Church of Jesus Christ has offered up from all parts of the world to the Divine Founder of the Church and to His Blessed Mother for the Church's visible head, the successor of Peter, just in the same way as was done twenty centuries ago when persecution assailed Peter himself: the prayers of sacred shepherds of souls and of

peoples, of clergy and of faithful, of members of religious Orders, of adults and of young and of children; prayers in the most exquisite and efficacious forms, of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and Eucharistic Communions, of supplications and of acts of adoration and reparation, of spontaneous immolations and of sufferings endured in a Christian manner; prayers of which the echo reached Us during all these days immediately following the sad events and which brought Us great consolation, and never so strong and so consoling as on this sacred and solemn day dedicated to the memory of the Princes of the Apostles and on which day Divine Providence disposed that We were able to finish this Encyclical Letter.

Everything is definitely promised in answer to prayer: if the answer will not be the reestablishment of serene and tranquil relations, it will have its answer at any rate in Christian patience, in holy courage, in the infallible joy of suffering something with Jesus and for Jesus, with the youth and for the youth so dear to Him, until the hour hidden in the mystery of the Divine Heart which will infallibly be the most opportune for the cause of Truth and of Good.

And since from so many prayers We must hope for everything, and since everything is possible to that God Who has promised everything in answer to prayer, We have confident hope that He will illumine minds to Truth and turn wills to Good, so that the Church of God, which wishes nothing from the state that belongs to the competence of the state, will cease to be asked for that which is the Church's competence—the education and the Christian formation of youth—and this not through human favor, but by Divine mandate, and that which therefore she always asks and will always ask with an insistence and an intransigeance which cannot cease or waver because it does not come from human desire or design, or from human ideas, changeable in different times and places and circumstances, but from the Divine and inviolable disposition.

And We are inspired also by faith and confidence to believe that good will undoubtedly come from the recognition of such a truth and of such a right.

As the Father of all the redeemed, the Vicar of that Redeemer Who, after having taught and commanded all to love their enemies, died pardoning those who were crucifying Him, is not and never will be the enemy of anyone, so will do the same, all good and true sons, those Catholics who wish to remain worthy of the name of Catholic. But they will not ever be able to agree to adopt or to favor maxims or ways of thinking and acting contrary to the rights of the Church and to the welfare of souls and therefore contrary to the rights of Almighty God. How preferable to this irreducible division of minds and of wills would be the peaceful and tranquil union of thoughts and of feelings that through happy necessity could not help becoming transformed into the fruitful cooperation of all for the true good and for the common good, and that with the sympathetic applause of the Catholics of the world, instead of, as at present, with universal blame and discontent.

We pray the God of all mercies, through the intercession of His Blessed Mother who so recently smiled on us from the splendors of her pluricentenary celebration, and of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, that He make us all see that which is proper to do and give us all the force to put it into effect. May Our Apostolic Blessing, the augury and pledge of Divine blessings, descend upon you, Venerable Brethren, on your clergy, on your people, and remain forever.

Rome, from the Vatican, solemnity of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, June 29, 1931.

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THE LIGHT OF TRUTH

CONCERNING THE CELEBRATION OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTENARY OF THE OECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF EPHESUS

Encyclical Letter

(Lux veritatis)

of

His Holiness, Pope Pius XI

(Vatican Press Translation)

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OF

POPE PIUS XI

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ENCYCLICAL LETTER

TO THE VENERABLE BRETHREN,
PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS
AND OTHER LOCAL ORDINARIES
IN PEACE AND COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE
CONCERNING THE
CELEBRATION OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTENARY
OF THE OECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF EPHESUS

POPE PIUS XI

VENERABLE BRETHREN
GREETING AND APOSTOLICAL BLESSING

I

HISTORY as the light of truth and witness of the ages, if properly investigated and diligently explored, shows that the divine promise made by Jesus Christ: "I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" [1] has never failed His spouse, the Church, and will certainly never fail in future. Nay more, the fiercer the waves on which the divine bark of Peter is tossed, in the course of the centuries, the closer at hand and stronger is the aid of divine grace. This is what happened in the early days of the Church, not only when the Christian name was a hated stigma to be punished by death, but also when the True Faith of Christ, owing to the treachery of the sowers of heresies, especially in Eastern countries, was greatly confused and in imminent peril. As the persecutors of Catholicity one after another perished miserably, and the Roman Empire itself

[1] Matthew 28, 20.

fell in ruins, so the heretics all, as withered branches [2] severed from the divine vine, could not drink in the sap of life, nor produce fruit.

The Church of God, however, amid so many storms and changes in perishable institutions, relying solely on God has at all times proceeded on her way with sure and stately step, and has never ceased to guard devotedly the sacred deposit of evangelical truth confided to her by her Founder.

These things occur to Our mind, Venerable Brethren, as We begin to address you by this letter on the most happy event, the celebration of the fifteenth centenary of the Oecumenical Council of Ephesus, in which the cunning impudence of the erring was exposed, and, supported by heavenly aid, the unshaken faith of the Church shone brightly.

Commemoration Is Applauded

We know how at Our request two excellent men [3] formed a committee to commemorate as worthily as possible this centenary, not only here in the chief city of the Catholic world, but among the nations everywhere. We know also how those to whom this charge was given by Us spared neither study nor labor, each to the best of his ability, that this salutary undertaking might be carried forward. On this alacrity of minds—with which nearly everywhere and with an altogether admirable cooperation bishops and distinguished members of the laity freely responded to their utmost—We express Our hearty congratulations. By it We

[2] John 15, 6.

[3] Letter to the Most Eminent Cardinals, B. Pompili and A. Sincero, d. 25 Dec., 1930, Acta Ap. Sedis, Vol. XXIII, pp. 10-12.

are confident the Catholic cause will reap in the future no slight advantage.

Considering this event and all the facts and circumstances connected with it, as the celebration draws to a close, and the sacred season when the Blessed Virgin Mary brought forth for us the Saviour comes round again, We, by the apostolical office which We hold from on high, deem it proper to communicate with you by this Encyclical Letter on this most important matter. We cherish the good hope that not only will Our words be pleasing and useful to you and yours, but also, that if the many who are separated from the Apostolic See, brothers and sons most dear to Us, being moved by the quest of truth, reflect and ponder on them, they cannot help being led by history as teacher of life, and affected by the desire at least of one fold and one Shepherd, to embrace the true faith which is ever kept sound and entire in the Roman Church. In the process which the Fathers of the Council of Ephesus followed, in opposing the Nestorian heresy and conducting the Council three dogmas of the Catholic Religion, which We shall treat principally, shine forth with brilliancy in the eyes of all; namely, that the person of Jesus Christ is one and divine; that the Blessed Virgin Mary should be acknowledged and venerated by everyone as really and truly the Mother of God; and that when matters of faith or morals are concerned the Roman Pontiff has from on high an authority which is supreme, above all others and subject to none.

The Warning of St. Paul

To proceed with order, as a beginning We make Our own the sentiment and warning of the Apostle

of the Gentiles to the Ephesians: "Until we all meet into the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ; That henceforth we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the wickedness of men, by cunning craftiness, by which men lie in wait to deceive. But doing the truth in charity, we may in all things grow up in Him Who is the Head, even Christ: From Whom the whole body, being compacted and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in charity." [4]

Just as the Fathers of the Council followed this apostolical exhortation with wonderful unanimity, so We wish that everyone without discrimination or prejudice should take it as addressed to himself and turn it to good account.

As all know, Nestorius was the author of the whole controversy. He did not originate new doctrine by his own talent and study, but borrowed it from Theodore, Bishop of Mopsuestia, and undertook to popularize it zealously, after developing it and clothing it with the appearance of novelty and with great array of language and sentiment, excelling as he did in the gift of expression.

Born in Germanicia, a town of Syria, he went as a youth to Antioch there to be instructed in sacred and profane learning. In that city, so famous at the time, he first embraced the monastic life and next, owing to instability of character, left it and

[4] Ephesians 4, 13-16.

became a priest, taking wholly to preaching in the quest of human applause more than of the glory of God. The fame of his eloquence inflamed the multitude and spread so far and wide that he was invited to Constantinople, then widowed of its Shepherd, and not long after, with the hearty approbation of all, he was raised to the episcopal dignity. In this truly distinguished See, instead of ceasing to spread his perverse doctrines, he continued to teach and popularize them with still greater authority and boastfulness.

Points of Nestorius' Heresy

To appreciate the matter properly, it will help to touch briefly on the principal points of the Nestorian heresy. This highly elated man, claiming that there were two hypostases, the human of Jesus, and the divine of the Word, meeting in one common "prosopo" as he termed it, denied the marvellous and substantial union of the two natures, which we call hypostatic, and asserted that the only begotten Word of God was not made man, but was in human flesh only by indwelling, by good pleasure and by virtue of operating in it: that therefore He should be called not God but "Theophoron," or god-bearer, in much the same manner as prophets and other holy men, owing to the divine grace imparted to them, might be called god-bearing.

From these perverse fabrications of Nestorius it was easy to recognize in Christ two persons, one divine, the other human. It followed necessarily that the Blessed Virgin Mary is not truly the Mother of God. *Theotokos,* but Mother rather of

the man Christ, *Christotocon,* or at most *Theodochon,* that is, the recipient of God.[5]

Wicked dogmas of this kind, proclaimed not covertly nor obscurely by a private individual, but openly and plainly by the very Bishop of the See of Constantinople, created the greatest mental disturbance, especially in the Eastern Church. Among the opponents of the Nestorian heresy, who were numerous in the Eastern Empire's capital city itself, was that most holy man and champion of Catholic integrity, Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, who holds without question the principal place. As soon as he heard of the perverse opinions of the Bishop of Constantinople, he earnestly defended the orthodox faith, as he was most zealous not only for his own sons, but also for the erring brethren, and endeavored by letters to Nestorius written in a fraternal spirit to bring him back to the norm of Catholic truth.

When, however, the obdurate pertinacity of Nestorius made useless this earnest effort of charity, Cyril, dutifully aware, and fearless champion, of the authority of the Roman Church, would not urge the matter by himself nor in so grave a case pass sentence without previously petitioning and obtaining the judgment of the Apostolic See. To the "Most Blessed" therefore "and most dear to God Father Celestine" he wrote a most respectful letter in which, in filial spirit, he says, among other things: "The longstanding custom of the Church requires that such matters be made known to Your Holiness." [6]. . . "We are not breaking off com-

[5] Mansi, Conciliorum Amplissima Collectio IV, c. 1007; Schwartz, Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum 1, 5. p. 408.

[6] Mansi, l.c., IV, 1011.

munion with him openly and plainly until we shall have made these things known to your loving kindness. Deign therefore to declare your opinion so that it may be clearly known to us whether we should have anything in common with him, or tell him plainly that no one can have anything in common with one who fosters and preaches such erroneous doctrine. Furthermore, your entire opinion and your decision in this matter should be clearly made known to the most pius and godfearing bishops of Macedonia and to every bishop in the East." [7]

Condemnation of the Heresy

Nestorius was not ignorant of the supreme authority of the Bishop of Rome over the universal Church. More than once, in fact, by letters written to Celestine, he attempted to prove the correctness of his teaching, and to preoccupy and win over the mind of the Pontiff to himself, but in vain. Since therefore the ill-coined words of the heresiarch expressed serious errors, no sooner had the Bishop of the Apostolic See perceived these than, applying the remedy, lest the plague of heresy might become more dangerous by delay, he solemnly condemned the errors found by a synodal examination, and decreed that they should be condemned by all.

Now here We request you, Venerable Brethren, to observe closely how greatly the procedure of the Roman Pontiff in this case differed from that which was followed by the Bishop of Alexandria. Although the latter occupied the See which ranked

[7] Mansi, l.c., IV, 1015.

as primatial in the Eastern Church, he was unwilling, as We have said, to adjudge this most grave controversy about Catholic faith until he could learn the sacred decision of the Apostolic See. Celestine, on the other hand, convoking a synod in Rome, and weighing the matter carefully, by virtue of his supreme and absolute authority over the universal flock of Christ, solemnly decreed and sanctioned what follows about the teaching of the Bishop of Constantinople. He wrote to Nestorius: "Know plainly therefore that this is Our sentence: Unless you preach what the Roman, the Alexandrian, and the universal Catholic Church holds, and what the sacred and holy Church of Constantinople held so well up to your time, and unless within ten days from the time this covenant becomes known to you, you shall have in open and written confession condemned this perfidious innovation, which aims at separating what the venerable Scripture has joined together, you are cast out from communion with the universal Catholic Church. This formula of Our judgment, with all the documents, We have forwarded by Our esteemed deacon Possidonius to my saintly fellow priest, the Bishop of the renowned city of Alexandria, who has fully reported to Us on this subject, so that as Our viceregent he may make known Our decision to you and to all the brethren, as they should all know what is done, since the matter treated concerns them all." [8]

The Roman Pontiff enjoined on the Patriarch of Alexandria the execution of this sentence in these grave words: "Armed with the authority of Our

[8] Mansi, l. c., IV, 1034 sq.

See, and acting in Our stead, you will execute this sentence with strict vigor so that within the ten days as numbered in this covenant, he shall condemn his perverse preachings by written profession, and affirm that he holds concerning the birth of Christ as God the faith which the Roman Church, the Church of your holiness and the faithful hold universally. Unless he shall do this, let your holiness provide for that Church, and let him know that he is in every way removed from our body." [9]

Rome's Place in the Council

Some writers, however, both of earlier and more recent date, as if attempting to make light of the indisputable authority of the documents We have quoted, have put forth this opinion of the whole affair often in a proud and boastful spirit. Grant, they say thoughtlessly, that the Roman Bishop did issue a peremptory and absolute judgment which the Alexandrian Bishop, through enmity with Nestorius, had provoked and gladly made his own: nevertheless, the Council of Ephesus, convened afterwards, again passed judgment on the whole matter, that had been already judged and wholly reprobated by the Holy See, and decided by its own supreme authority what all should think of it. Whence, as they conclude, it follows that an Oecumenical Council has rights more powerful and valid than the authority of the Bishop of Rome.

However, all who look diligently into facts and written documents for honest history, with minds wholly free of prejudices, can see how these men strive vainly to invest a counterfeit with semblance

[9] Migne, P. L., 50, 463; IV, 1019 sq.

of truth. First of all, be it observed that when the Emperor Theodosius, and his colleague Valentinian in his name, convoked an Oecumenical Council, the sentence of Celestine had not yet reached Constantinople, and was in no way known there. Besides, when Celestine learned that the Council of Ephesus had been convoked, he did not object to the proposed deliberation; nay he even wrote to Theodosius [10] and the Alexandrian Archbishop [11] praising this proposal, and delegated and sent as his legates to preside over the Council, the Patriarch Cyril, the Bishops Arcadius and Projectus, and the priest Philip.

Now in doing this the Roman Pontiff did not leave to the arbitration of the Council the case as if undecided, but firmly adhering to "what has already been decided by Us," [12] he ordered the Fathers of the Council to execute the sentence imposed by him so that, conferring among themselves and offering prayers to God, they might endeaver to bring back the erring Bishop of the Constantinopolitan See to the unity of the Faith. Cyril inquired from the Pontiff how he should act in the business, "whether the sacred Council should admit a man who condemned what it held; or whether, as the time for indulgence had passed, the sentence already imposed should take effect."

Celestine wrote: "Let this be the part of your holiness and of the venerable brethren in the Council, that the strife arisen in the Church be suppressed, and let Us learn that, God helping, the affair is closed with the avowed correction. We do

[10] Mansi, l.c., IV, 1291.
[11] Mansi, l.c., IV, 1292.
[12] Mansi, l.c., IV, 1287.

not say We are not of the Council, because We cannot be absent from those, wherever they may be, with whom one faith still unites Us . . . We are there because what is done there for all is in Our thoughts; We are acting spiritually, because We do not appear to act corporally. I am eager for Catholic peace, and I am eager for the salvation of one perishing if only he be willing to admit his ailment. This We say lest perhaps We might seem to be wanting to one who may be willing to correct himself. Let this show that Our feet are not swift to shed blood, since he knows that the remedy is offered to him." [13]

Acceptance of Papal Authority

These words of Celestine reveal his paternal spirit, and prove most convincingly that before everything else he sought to have the true light of faith shine upon blinded minds and that he would rejoice at the return of the erring to the Church. Moreover, what he prescribed to his legates as they set out for Ephesus makes clear the concern and solicitude with which he ordered that the divinely bestowed rights of the Roman See should be kept safe and secure: "We command that the authority of the Apostolic See be protected, as the instructions which have been given you state. You are to be present at the Council since, should disputes arise, you are to judge of the various opinions, not to take part in the contest." [14]

The legates did as instructed, with the Fathers of the sacred Council in full agreement. Indeed, in firm and faithful accordance with the most

[13] Mansi, l.c., IV, 1292.
[14] Mansi, l.c., IV, 556.

absolute commands of the Pontiff as stated above, when they arrived at Ephesus after the conclusion of the first session, they insisted that all the decrees enacted at the previous session should be submitted to them, to be confirmed and approved in the name of the Apostolic See: "We request you to direct that we be shown all the acts of this sacred Council so that in accordance with the decision of our blessed Pope and of this sacred gathering we also may confirm. . . ." [15]

Before the entire Council the priest Philip uttered that remarkable opinion on the primacy of the Roman Church which the dogmatic Constitution of the Vatican Council itself quotes (*Pastor Aeternus*) [16]: "No one doubts, nay for centuries it has been known that the holy and most blessed Peter, prince and head of the Apostles, column of faith, and foundation of the Catholic Church, received from Our Lord Jesus Christ, Saviour and Redeemer of the human race, the keys of the Kingdom, that the power of binding and loosing sins was given to him; that up till now and forever he lives in his successors and exercises judgment." [17]

What more? Did the Fathers of the Oecumenical Council object to the way the legates acted, or were they in any way opposed to it? On the contrary. Written documents have come down which establish most clearly their obedient respect and reverence. In the second section of the Council when the pontifical legates, reading Celestine's letters, said among other things: "In Our solicitude We have directed Our holy brothers and fellow

[15] Mansi, l.c., IV, 1290.
[16] Conc. Vatic., sess IV, cap 2.
[17] Mansi, l.c., IV, 1295.

priests, one in mind with Us, the Bishops Arcadius and Projectus and Our fellow priest Philip, to be present at what is done and to perform what We have before decreed, not doubting that the assent of your holiness will be given to this. . . ." [18] So far from resenting this ruling of the supreme judge, the Fathers of the Council, praising it, with one voice acclaimed the Supreme Pontiff with these utterances: "A just judgment! To the new Paul Celestine, to the new Paul Cyril, to Celestine, guardian of the faith, to Celestine one in heart with the Council, to Celestine, the whole Council gives thanks; one Celestine, one Cyril, one faith in the Council, one faith the world over!" [19]

Other Confirmations

When it came to condemning and reprobating Nestorius, the Fathers of the Council did not think that the matter was for them to judge freely and all over again, but plainly professed themselves anticipated and bound by the oracle of the Roman Pontiff. "Overtaking him (Nestorius) as thinking and preaching impiously, and obliged by the sacred canons and the letter of our most holy father and fellow in the ministry, Celestine, Bishop of the Church of Rome, in a flood of tears we have to arrive at this sad sentence against him. Wherefore Our Lord Jesus Christ, outraged by his blasphemous utterances, by this most sacred Council has defined that the same Nestorius is deprived of the episcopal dignity and cut off from all sacerdotal association and gathering." [20]

[18] Mansi, l.c., IV, 1287.
[19] Mansi, l.c., IV, 1287.
[20] Mansi, l.c., IV, 1294 sq.

Firmus, Bishop of Caesarea, proclaimed the very same thing in the second session of the Council: "The Apostolic and Holy See by letters of the most holy Bishop Celestine, which he has sent to most devoted Bishops, . . . even before he prescribed the decision and rule concerning this affair, which we also have followed . . . since Nestorius, when cited by us, has not appeared, we command that the formula be executed pronouncing on him canonical and apostolical judgment." [21]

Now therefore the documents quoted by Us establish so expressly and significantly that the belief in the authority of the Roman Pontiff over the entire flock of Christ, subject to none and infallible, flourished in those days in the universal Church, as to recall to Our mind that clear and brilliant statement of Augustine a few years before on the judgment brought by Pope Zosimus in his Tractorial Letter against the Pelagians: "In these words of the Holy See Catholic belief is so venerable and well founded, so certain and clear, that no Christian may doubt it." [22]

Would that the most holy Bishop of Hippo could have been present at the Council of Ephesus; grasping with his keen intellect the point at issue between the disputants, how ably he would have shed light on the dogmas of Catholic truth and defended them with his courage! However, when the legates of the Emperors reached Hippo, to hand him the letters of invitation, there was nothing to be done, except to mourn over the extinction of that sur-

[21] Mansi, l.c., IV, 1287 sq.

[22] Epist. 190, Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum, 57, p. 159 sq.

passing splendor of Christian wisdom and his See ravaged by the Vandals.

You are aware, Venerable Brethren, that some who are engaged in historical investigation specialize not only in clearing Nestorius from the stain of heresy, but also in accusing the most holy Alexandrian bishop Cyril of a wicked rivalry, of calumniating Nestorius as an enemy and of contending with all his might to bring about his condemnation for things he did not teach. Indeed, the defenders of the Bishop of Constantinople do not hesitate to brand with this grave incrimination Our most blessed predecessor Celestine himself and even the sacrosanct Council of Ephesus.

General Recognition of Decree

However, the universal Church answers by reprobating this vain and rash venture. At all times she has recognized that the condemnation of Nestorius was justly pronounced, that Cyril's doctrine was orthodox, and she has ever regarded with veneration the Council of Ephesus as one of the Oecumenical Councils celebrated under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Indeed, passing by many of the most convincing written documents, everyone surely knows that very many of the disciples of Nestorius—who had before their eyes the course of events, and who had no tie of relationship with Cyril—although they had been drawn to the other side out of friendship with Nestorius and on account of the strong attraction of his writings and the very exciting ardor of his controversies, after the Council of Ephesus, as if they had been stricken by the light of truth, they gradually deserted the heretical Constanti-

nopolitan Bishop as one to be shunned by the law of the Church. Of these there were certainly many survivors when Our predecessor of happy memory, Leo the Great, wrote as follows to Paschasinus, Bishop of Lilybæum, his legate to the Council of Chalcedon: "You know that the whole Church of Constantinople with all its monasteries and many bishops agreed in subscribing to anathematize Nestorius and Eutyches and their dogmas.[23] In a dogmatic letter to the Emperor Leo he proclaimed Nestorius in the plainest terms as a heretic and teacher of heresy with no one to gainsay it. "Anathema therefore," he says, "to Nestorius, who believed the Blessed Virgin Mary was Mother not of God but of man only; who did not believe that there was one Christ in the Word and in the flesh, but one person in the flesh and another of the Deity, and preached as a separate and apart one son of God, another son of man." [24] As all should know, the Council of Chalcedon sanctioned this by reprobating Nestorius again and praising the doctrine of Cyril. Our most holy predecessor, Gregory the Great, had scarcely been raised to the Chair of Peter when in his synodical letter to the Eastern Bishops, after mentioning the four Oecumenical Councils—of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus and Chalcedon—he makes this most noble and most important statement: "On these as on a foursquare stone rises and stands the structure of faith and of each one's life and action. Whosoever does not cling to their solidity, even though he be a stone, lies outside the structure." [25]

[23] Mansi, l.c., VI, 124.
[24] Mansi, l.c., VI, 351-354.
[25] Migne, P.L., 77, 478; cfr. Mansi, l.c., IX, 1048.

It should be clear to all therefore that Nestorius really preached heretical tenets, that the Patriarch of Alexandria was a strenuous defender of Catholic faith, and that the Pontiff Celestine, with the Council of Ephesus, guarded the ancient doctrine and the supreme authority of the Apostolic See.

II

Let us now, Venerable Brethren, proceed to investigate further those points of doctrine which the Oecumenical Council of Ephesus openly professed and sanctioned with its authority by the condemnation of Nestorius. Besides condemning Pelagius and his followers—one of whom Nestorius surely was—the principal matter in question, and one on which the Fathers solemnly and almost unanimously agreed, was that the opinion of the heresiarch was impious and opposed to Holy Writ, and that what he rejected is therefore certain, namely, that there is one person in Christ, and that divine. Since Nestorius, as We have said, stubbornly contended that the Divine Word is not substantially and hypostatically united with human nature, but by a certain accidental and moral bond, the Fathers at Ephesus, in condemning the Bishop of Constantinople, clearly professed the right doctrine of the Incarnation to be held firmly by all. In letters and capitularies sent previously to Nestorius and inserted in the Acts of this Oecumenical Council, Cyril, in wonderful agreement with the Roman Church, maintained this in these learned and insistent words . . . "On no account is it lawful to divide our one Lord Jesus Christ into two sons . . . For Scripture does not say that the Word associated with Himself the person of man,

but was made flesh. That the Word was made flesh means It communicated like us with flesh and blood. It made our body Its own and came forth as man from a woman not losing divinity nor origin from the Father, but, in assuming flesh, It remained what It was." [26]

We are taught by Sacred Scripture and by divine tradition that the Word of God united Itself not to any individual man, already in existence, but that the one and the same Christ is the Word of God dwelling in the bosom of God before all ages, and made man in time. Divinity and humanity in Jesus Christ, Redeemer of the human race, are bound together in the wonderful union which is justly styled hypostatic, and this is proved most clearly in Holy Writ wherein the one Christ is called not only God and Man, but distinctly held also as God and likewise as man, and, finally, as man to die, and as God to rise from the dead.

In other words, He Who is conceived in the womb of the Virgin by the action of the Holy Spirit, born, laid in the crib, calling Himself son of man, suffers, dies nailed to the Cross, is altogether the same, called by the Eternal Father in a wonderful and solemn manner: "My Beloved Son,"[27] with divine power grants pardon for sin,"[28] restores by His own power the sick to health[29] and recalls the dead to life.[30] All this is clear evidence of two natures in Christ, from which proceed works that are divine and human, and shows also very clearly

[26] Mansi, l.c., IV, 891.
[27] Matt. 3, 17; 17, 5. 11 Peter 1, 17.
[28] Matt. 9, 2-6. Luke 5, 20-24. VII 48, al.
[29] Matt. 8, 3. Mark 14, 1. Luke 5, 13. John 9, al.
[30] John 11, 43. Luke 7, 14 al.

that Christ is one, God and man alike, through the unity of the Divine Person by which he is called "Theantropos."

Doctrines Approved and Confirmed

It is clear to all that this doctrine handed down by the Church has been approved and confirmed by the dogma of human Redemption. For how could Christ, said to be "First born of many brethren,"[31] wounded on account of our iniquities,[32] redeem us from the servitude of sin unless, like ourselves, he possessed human nature? In like manner, by what right could He be said to satisfy the justice of the Heavenly Father, outraged by the human race, unless by His Divine Person He was able to do so by His immense and infinite dignity?

This principle of Catholic truth cannot be contradicted for the reason that our Redeemer, not having a human person, should seem to lack some perfection of His human nature and therefore as man be inferior to ourselves. As Aquinas shrewdly and wisely reminds us: "Personality belongs to the dignity and perfection of any being in so far as the dignity and perfection of any being require that it should have its own existence as is understood, by the term person. It is, however, a greater dignity for anyone to exist in someone of greater dignity than to have one's own existence. Therefore human nature is more dignified in Christ than in us, because in us with our own existence it has its own personality, whereas in Christ it exists in the person of the Word. As it pertains to the

[31] Rom. 8, 29.
[32] Isaias 53, 5. Matt. 8, 17.

dignity of the form to be the completion of the species, so the sensitive nature in man is more noble because of its conjunction with the more noble completing form than it is in the brute animal in which it is the completing form."[33]

Moreover it is worth while observing that an Arius, that most nefarious subverter of Catholic unity, opposed the divine nature of the Word consubstantial with the Eternal Father, so Nestorius, arguing in a wholly different manner, by denying the hypostatic union of the Redeemer, denied to Christ divinity full and entire as not being the Word. If, as he rashly considered, the divine and human nature in Christ were united only by a moral connection—which, as We have said, the prophets and others of heroic Christian holiness had obtained on account of their union with God—the Saviour of the human race would differ little or not at all from those whom He redeemed by His grace and blood. With the abandonment therefore of the doctrine of the hypostatic union, on which the dogma of the Incarnation and human Redemption rests and depends, the whole foundation of the Catholic religion falls away in ruin. We do not wonder therefore that the entire Catholic world trembled before the perilous advance of the Nestorian heresy; nor do we wonder that the Council of Ephesus zealously resisted its rash and very crafty attack on the ancestral faith and, by executing the sentence of the Roman Pontiff, overthrew it with dire anathema.

We therefore, responding with minds in concord with every age of the Christian era, venerate as Re-

[33] Summ. Theol. 111.11.2.

deemer of the human race not "Elias . . . nor one of the Prophets" in whom the God of heaven dwells by His grace, but with the Prince of the Apostles, acknowledging like him this heavenly mystery, with one voice proclaim: "Thou art Christ, Son of the living God."[34]

With this dogma of truth safely established, it is easy to conclude that the entire fabric of mundane things has by the mystery of the Incarnation been invested with a dignity greater than can be imagined, far greater than that to which the work of creation was raised. Among the offspring of Adam there is One, namely Christ, Who attained everlasting and infinite, divinity, and Who is united with it in a mysterious and most intimate manner; Christ, We repeat, our brother, possessed of human nature, but God with us, or Emmanuel, Who by His grace and merits has brought us back to the divine Author and recovered for us that heavenly blessedness from which by original sin we had fallen away. Let us therefore be of grateful mind, follow our precepts, imitate our examples. In this way we shall be partakers of the Divinity, "Who deigned to partake of our human nature."[35]

Those Who Wandered From Faith

At all times, as We have said, through the course of ages the true Church of Jesus Christ has diligently safeguarded this genuine and incorrupt doctrine on the personal unity and divinity of its Founder, but unfortunately it is otherwise among those who wander most pitiably outside the one fold

[34] Matt. 16, 14.
[35] Roman Missal.

of Christ. We regret that, whenever anyone separates himself obstinately from the infallible teaching of the Church, he loses gradually the certain and true doctrine about Jesus Christ. If we should ask the many different sects, those especially dating from the XVI and XVII centuries and still bearing the honored name Christian, all of which at the time they broke away professed firm belief in Christ as God and man, what they now think of Him, we would receive various and often conflicting answers. Indeed, few of them have kept the right doctrine and full faith concerning the person of our Redeemer; the others, even when they affirm something like it, seem to be like evaporated perfumes bereft of their essence. They present Jesus Christ as man, endowed with divine gifts, united more than others in some hidden way with divinity, very close to God; but they are far removed from a full and sincere profession of Catholic faith. Others still admit nothing divine in Christ, believe He is merely man favored, it is true, with unusual gifts of body and soul, but liable to error and to human frailties. Hence it appears clearly that all these, like Nestorius, wish by rash endeavor "to dissolve Christ," and therefore, according to the Apostle John, are not of God.[36]

From the exalted summit of this Apostolic See We therefore, with fatherly spirit, call upon all who glory in being disciples of Christ, and who place in Him their hope of salvation, of each one in particular and of human society, to cling always fast to the Roman Church in which Christ is believed with one faith, whole and perfect, worship-

[36] 1 John 4, 3.

ped with sincere adoration, and loved with undying flame of burning charity. Let those who preside over flocks separated from us remember how their forerunners solemnly professed the faith of Ephesus, and how in the past as in the present it has been kept and earnestly defended by this supreme Chair of Truth. Let them remember that this genuine unity of the faith rests and stands only on the one rock set by Christ, and further that it has been preserved safe and secure by the supreme authority of the successors of Blessed Peter.

On this unity of the Catholic religion We discoursed a few years ago in the Encyclical Letter *Mortalium animos,* but it will help to recall this briefly to mind, since the hypostatic union of Christ, solemnly affirmed in the Council of Ephesus, brings back and puts before us the image of that unity by which our Redeemer wishes His Mystical Body, the Church, to be distinguished as one body[37] "fully compacted and joined together."[38] If the personal unity of Christ exists as the mysterious exemplar with which He wishes the structure of Christian society to conform, everyone can see that this certainly cannot result from a feigned combination of discordances, but only from one hierarchy, one teaching body, one rule of belief, one Christian faith.[39] To this unity of the Church which is kept by communion with the Apostolic See Philip, the legate of the Bishop of Rome, witnessed when, reading the letters of Celestine with the unanimous applause of the Fathers of the Coun-

[37] 1 Cor. 12, 12.
[38] Ephesian 4, 16.
[39] Encycl. Mortalium animos.

cil, he uttered these memorable words: "We give thanks to this sacred and venerable Council, for as the letters of our holy and blessed Father were read to you, your holy members have followed them with your holy salute to the holy head, and with your holy acclamations. Your holiness is aware that the blessed Apostle Peter is the source of all faith and chief of the Apostles."[40]

Now if ever, Venerable Brethren, all good men should be bound together in professing one and the same sincere faith in Jesus Christ and His mystical Spouse the Church, when everywhere so many men strive to throw off the yoke of Christ, spurn the light of His doctrine, shut off the channels of His grace, repudiate the divine authority of Him Who has become "a sign of contradiction."[41] Since innumerable evils result from this deplorable desertion of Christ and increase daily, it is time that all should seek a remedy from Him Who is the One "under heaven given unto men, whereby we must be saved."[42]

In this way alone, with the Sacred Heart of Jesus inspiring the souls of mortals, can happier times come to the individual, the family and to civil society, so bitterly disturbed in these days.

III

From this principle of Catholic doctrine, which We have treated thus far, there necessarily follows the dogma of the divine motherhood which we predicate of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as Cyril reminds us, "not that the nature or divinity of the

[40] Mansi, l.c., IV, 1290.
[41] Luke 2, 34.
[42] Acts 4, 12.

Word took its origin or beginning from the holy Virgin, but that He derived from her His sacred body perfected by an intelligent soul to which the Word of God hypostatically united is said to be born according to the flesh."[43]

If the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary is God, she certainly who bore Him should rightly and deservingly be called Mother of God. If the person of Jesus Christ is one and divine, surely Mary is not only Mother of Christ but she should be called *Deipara, Theotocos.* She who was saluted by Elizabeth, her relative, "Mother of my Lord,"[44] who is said by the Martyr Ignatius to have brought forth God,[45] she from whom Tertullian says God was born,[46] we can all venerate as the benign parent of God, whom the eternal Godhead favored with fulness of grace and honored with so much dignity.

Moreover, no one can reject this truth handed down from the first ages of the Church, because the Blessed Virgin Mary gave to Jesus Christ a body but did not generate the Word of the heavenly Father; for Cyril in his day rightly and luminously answers that as all in whose womb our earthly fabric is procreated, but not a human soul, are truly mothers and are styled so, so in like manner through the unity of person of the Son she acquired divine maternity.[47] Rightly therefore the impious opinion of Nestorius which the Bishop of Rome, led by the divine spirit, had condemned the year before, was

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[43] Mansi, l.c., IV, 891.
[44] Luke 1, 43.
[45] Ad Ephes VII, 18-20.
[46] De Carne Christi, 17 P.L., II, 781.
[47] Mansi, l.c., IV, 599.

again solemnly reprobated by the Council of Ephesus.

So great was the piety of the people of Ephesus to the Virgin as *Deipara,* and so intense their love that on hearing the judgment of the Fathers of the Council they acclaimed them with an outpouring of joy, and forming ranks with blazing torches they accompanied them to their homes. Surely she, the great *Parens Dei,* smiling sweetly from heaven on that remarkable spectacle, took care of her children of Ephesus and all the faithful of Christ in the Catholic world who were disturbed by the treachery of the Nestorian heresy, with maternal heart and ever ready assistance.

From this dogma of the divine maternity, as from a hidden spring of gushing water, flows the singular grace of Mary and, after God, her great dignity. Indeed, as Aquinas nobly writes, "The Blessed Virgin as Mother of God has a certain infinite dignity from the infinite Good God is."[48] This Cornelius a Lapide develops and explains more fully: "The Blessed Virgin is Mother of God, and therefore by far excels all the angels, even the seraphim and cherubim. She is Mother of God, therefore most pure and holy, so much so that under God no greater purity can be imagined. She is Mother of God, and therefore whatever privilege has been granted to any of the saints (in the way of grace ingratiating, *gratum faciens*), that she has above all."[49]

Catholic Piety Toward Mary

Why therefore should so many innovators and

[48] Theol. III, a.6.
[49] In Matt. 1, 6.

non-Catholics bitterly condemn our piety toward the Virgin as *Deipara* as if we took away a worship due to God alone? Do they not know or consider attentively that nothing can be more pleasing to Christ Jesus, Who certainly loves His mother with a boundless love, than that we should venerate her, love her ardently, and, by imitating her most holy example, endeavor to obtain her powerful patronage?

Here We cannot pass over in silence what is of great comfort to Us, the fact that in our days some of the innovators know better the dignity of the Virgin as *Deipara* and are drawn and disposed to reverence and honor her diligently. Provided this proceeds from a serious and sincere conscience, and not with the motive of winning the favor of Catholics, as we have found in some places, We trust that, through the works and prayers of all good people, and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, these may be at length brought back to the fold of Jesus Christ, and in this way to Us, who, though unworthy, act in His place on earth and exercise His authority.

We feel that We should mention another function of the Motherhood of Mary, Venerable Brethren, which is still more pleasant and delightful. Since she brought forth the Redeemer of the human race and of all of us, whom the Lord Christ has willed to regard as brothers, she is in a certain manner the most benign mother.[50]

Our predecessor of happy memory, Leo XIII, wrote: "Such a one God gave us in whom, as He chose her for Mother of His Only Begotten, He im-

[50] Rom. 8, 29.

planted a maternal heart, capable of nothing but love and forgiveness; such by His own acts Jesus Christ manifested her, since He was subject and of His own accord obedient to her as a son to a mother; such He proclaimed her from the Cross when He committed the whole human race, through the disciple John, to be cared for and cherished by her; such finally she dedicated herself when, assuming, with great courage, the vast responsibility of the heritage left by her divine Son, she began at once to discharge maternal duties to all."[51]

Wherefore let us be drawn to her by a certain very powerful impulse and let us trust to her confidently all that is ours—joys, if we rejoice; woes, if we are in trial; hopes, if we endeavor to rise to better things. If the Church falls on difficult times, if faith wanes and charity grows cold, if morals, private and public, grow worse, if any danger threatens the Catholic cause or civil society, let us have recourse to her begging help from heaven; in the supreme trial of death, when all hope, all help, is gone, let us lift up our eyes in tears and trembling, imploring through her pardon from her Son and eternal joy in heaven.

Plea for Unity

With more ardent effort therefore in the present needs under which we labor, let all go to her, and with supplication beg earnestly "that, by interceding with her Son, the erring nations may return to Christian principles and precepts, on which the foundation of public welfare rests, and through which desirable peace and true happiness flourish in

[51] Encycl. Oct. Mens. Adventante, Sept., 1891.

abundance. From her also let them more earnestly pray for what all should have most at heart, that Mother Church may have liberty and the fruit of it in tranquillity, a liberty which it will use for the sole purpose of procuring the highest interests of mankind, and from which harm has never come to individuals or states, but always many very great benefits."[52]

Under the auspices of the heavenly Queen, We desire all to beg for a very special favor of the greatest importance, that she who is loved and venerated with such ardent piety by the people of the East, may not permit that they should be unhappily wandering and still kept apart from the unity of the Church and thus from her Son, Whose Vicar on earth We are. May they return to the common Father whose judgment the Fathers of the Council of Ephesus accepted so reverently, and whom they all saluted as "guardian of the faith." May all return to Us, Who feel for all a paternal kindness, and Who repeat as Our own those most loving words with which Cyril appealed to Nestorius: "May the peace of the Church be preserved and may the bond of love and concord remain unbroken among the priests of God!"[53]

Would, moreover, that very soon the happiest of days might dawn when the Virgin Mother of God, looking out through her image so exquisitely worked in mosaic under Our predecessor Sixtus III in the Liberian Basilica, and restored by Us to its original beauty, would see the separated children returning to venerate her with Us with one mind

[52] Epist. Encycl. s.c.
[53] Mansi, l.c., IV, 891.

and one faith! That certainly would be Our greatest possible joy.

We deem it auspicious that We are celebrating Our tenth anniversary; We, who have defended the dignity and sanctity of the chastity of marriage against the assault of all manner of fallacy,[54] and who have solemnly championed the sacred rights of the Catholic Church in the instruction of youth, and set forth and explained the manner in which it is to be imparted and the principles to which it should conform.[55] The directions We have given on both subjects are in accordance with the exalted exemplar of the divine maternity and of the family of Nazareth. As Our predecessor of happy memory, Leo XIII, says: "In Joseph fathers of families have the most beautiful model of fatherly attention and providence; in the most holy Virgin Mother of God the most extraordinary pattern of love, modesty, perfect submission and fidelity; in Jesus, Who as son of the household was subject to them, a Divine Exemplar of obedience to admire, cultivate and imitate." [56]

In a special manner is it opportune that those mothers of our day who, wearied of child-bearing or of the matrimonial bond, have neglected or violated the obligation they assumed, should look and meditate intently upon Mary, who ennobled the responsible charge of motherhood to the highest degree. This inspires the hope that with the grace received through the Queen of Heaven, they may become ashamed of the dishonor branded on the

[54] Litt. Encycl. Casti Connubii, XXI, Dec., 1930.
[55] Litt. Encycl. Divini Illius Magistrii XXI, Dec., 1929.
[56] Litt. Apost. Neminem fugit XIV, Jan., 1882.

great sacrament of matrimony and be happily moved, as far as possible, to attain to her wonderfully laudable virtues.

Mass of the Divine Maternity

If all these things should result as We counsel, if domestic society—the principle and foundation of all human intercourse—should revert to the most exalted standard of this holiness, we could in time provide a remedy for our dangerous evil conditions.

May it so happen that "the peace of God which surpasseth all understanding"[57] keep the minds and hearts of all and, with all our minds and forces united, may the longed-for Kingdom of Christ be established!

We shall not conclude this Letter without announcing something that will surely please you greatly. We desire that this centenary shall have a liturgical memorial, which will help to revive piety toward the great Mother of God among clergy and people. Wherefore We have directed the supreme Congregation of Sacred Rites to issue a Mass and Office of the Divine Maternity to be celebrated by the universal Church.

Meantime, as a presage of heavenly gifts and a mark of Our paternal will, We bestow affectionately in Our Lord on you, each and all, Venerable Brethren, and on your clergy and people, the Apostolical Benediction.

Given at Rome, in Saint Peter's, 25 December, on the Feast of the Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the year 1931, the tenth of Our Pontificate.

PIUS PP. XI.

[57] Philippians 4, 7.

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TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS
IN THE PRESENT DISTRESS
OF THE HUMAN RACE

Encyclical Letter

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of

His Holiness, Pope Pius XI

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ENCYCLICAL LETTER

TO THE
PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS
AND OTHER ORDINARIES
IN PEACE AND COMMUNION WITH THE
APOSTOLIC SEE
ON
OFFERING PRAYER AND EXPIATION TO THE
SACRED HEART OF JESUS IN THE PRESENT
DISTRESS OF THE HUMAN RACE

POPE PIUS XI

VENERABLE BRETHREN
HEALTH AND APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION

Urged by the charity of Christ We have invited with the Apostolic Letter "*Nova Impendet*" of October 2, 1931, all members of the Catholic Church, indeed all men of good will, to unite in a holy crusade of love and succor, in order to alleviate in some measure the terrible consequences of the economic crisis under which the human race is struggling. And truly wonderful was the unanimous enthusiasm with which the generosity and activity of all answered Our appeal. But distress has increased, the number of the unemployed has grown in practically all parts, and subversive elements are making use of the fact for their propaganda; hence public order is threatened more and more, and the peril of terrorism and anarchy hangs over society ever more ominously. Such being the case, the same charity of Christ moves us to turn once again to you, Venerable Brethren, to the faithful in your charge, to the whole world, and to exhort all to

unite, and to resist with all their might the evils that are crushing humanity, and the still graver evils that are threatening.

CHAPTER ONE

If We pass in review the long and sorrowful sequence of woes, that, as a sad heritage of sin, mark the stages of fallen man's earthly pilgrimage, from the flood on, it would be hard to find spiritual and material distress so deep, so universal, as that which we are now experiencing; even the greatest scourges that left indelible traces in the lives and memories of peoples, struck only one nation at a time. Now, on the contrary, the whole of humanity is held bound by the financial and economic crisis, so fast, that the more it struggles the harder appears the task of loosening its bonds; there is no people, there is no state, no society or family which in one way or another, directly or indirectly, to a greater or less extent, does not feel the repercussion. Even those, very few in number, who appear to have in their hands, together with enormous wealth, the destinies of the world, even those very few who with their speculations were and are in great part the cause of so much woe are themselves quite often the first and most notorious victims, dragging down with themselves into the abyss the fortunes of countless others; thus verifying in a terrible manner and before the whole world what the Holy Ghost had already proclaimed for every sinner in particular: "By what things a man sinneth, by the same also he is tormented."

This deplorable state of things, Venerable Brethren, makes Our paternal heart groan; and makes

Us feel more and more deeply the need of adopting, in the measure of Our insufficiency, the sublime sentiment of the Sacred Heart of Jesus: "I have compassion on the multitude." But still more deplorable is the root from which springs this condition of affairs: For, if what the Holy Ghost affirms through the mouth of St. Paul is ever true, much more is it true at present: "The desire of money is the root of all evils." Is it not that lust of earthly goods, that the pagan poet called with righteous scorn "the accursed hunger for gold;" is it not that sordid egoism which too often regulates the mutual relations of individuals and society; is it not, in fine, greed, whatever be its species and form, that has brought the world to a pass we all see and deplore? From greed arises mutual distrust, that casts a blight on all human dealings; from greed arises hateful envy which makes a man consider the advantages of another as losses to himself; from greed arises narrow individualism which orders and subordinates everything to its own advantage without taking account of others, on the contrary cruelly trampling under foot all rights of others. Hence the disorder and inequality from which arises the accumulation of the wealth of nations in the hands of a small group of individuals who manipulate the market of the world at their own caprice, to the immense harm of the masses, as we showed last year in Our Encyclical Letter "*Quadragesimo Anno.*"

Right order of Christian charity does not disapprove of lawful love of country and a sentiment of justifiable nationalism; on the contrary it controls, sanctifies, and enlivens them. If, however, egoism,

abusing this love of country and exaggerating this sentiment of nationalism, insinuates itself into the relations between people and people, there is no excess that will not seem justified; and that which between individuals would be judged blameworthy by all, is now considered lawful and praiseworthy if it is done in the name of this exaggerated nationalism. Instead of the great law of love and human brotherhood, which embraces and holds in a single family all nations and peoples with one Father Who is in Heaven, there enters hatred, driving all to destruction. In public life sacred principles, the guide of all social intercourse, are trampled upon; the solid foundations of right and honesty, on which the State should rest, are undermined; polluted and closed are the sources of those ancient traditions which, based on faith in God and fidelity to his law, secured the true progress of nations.

Profiting by so much economic distress and so much moral disorder, the enemies of all social order, be they called Communists, or any other name, boldly set about breaking through every restraint. This is the most dreadful evil of our times, for they destroy every bond of law, human or divine; they engage openly and in secret in a relentless struggle against religion and against God himself; they carry out the diabolical program of wresting from the hearts of all, even of children, all religious sentiment; for well they know that when once belief in God has been taken from the heart of mankind they will be entirely free to work out their will. Thus we see today, what was never before seen in history, the satanical banners of war against God and against religion brazenly unfurled

to the winds in the midst of all peoples and in all parts of the earth.

There were never lacking impious men, nor men who denied God; but they were relatively few, isolated and individual, and they did not care or did not think it opportune to reveal too openly their impious mind, as the inspired Psalmist appears to suggest, when he exclaims: "The fool hath said in his heart: there is no God." The impious, the atheist, lost in the crowd, denied God, His Creator, but, in the secret of his heart. Today, on the contrary, atheism has already spread through large masses of the people: well organized, it works its way even into the common schools; it appears in theaters; in order to spread, it makes use of its own cinema films, of the gramophone and the radio; with its own printing presses it prints booklets in every language; it promotes special exhibitions and public parades; it has formed its own political parties and its own economic and military systems. This organized and militant atheism works untiringly by means of its agitators, with conferences and projections, with every means of propaganda, secret and open, among all classes, in every street, in every hall; it secures for this nefarious activity the moral support of its own universities, and holds fast the unwary with the mighty bonds of its organizing power. At the sight of so much activity placed at the service of so wicked a cause, there comes spontaneously to Our mind and to Our lips the mournful lament of Christ: "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light."

The leaders of this campaign of atheism, turning

to account the present economic crisis, inquire with diabolic reasoning into the cause of this universal misery. The Holy Cross of Our Lord, symbol of humility and poverty, is joined together with the symbols of modern imperialism, as though religion were allied with those dark powers which produce such evils among men. Thus they strive, and not without effect, to combine war against God with men's struggle for their daily bread, with their desire to have land of their own, suitable wages and decent dwellings, in fine, a condition of life befitting human beings. The most legitimate and necessary desires, just as the most brutal instincts, everything serves their anti-religious program, as if the order established by God stood in contradiction with the welfare of mankind, and were not on the contrary its only sure safeguard; as if human forces by means of modern mechanical power could combat the divine forces and introduce a new and better ordering of things.

Now it is a lamentable fact that millions of men, under the impression that they are struggling for existence, grasp at such theories to the utter subversion of truth, and cry out against God and religion. Nor are these assaults directed only against the Catholic religion, but against all who still recognize God as Creator of Heaven and Earth and as absolute Lord of all things. And the secret societies always ready to support war against God and the Church, no matter who wages it, do not fail to inflame ever more this insane hatred which can give neither peace nor happiness to any class of society, but will certainly bring all nations to disaster.

Thus, this new form of atheism, whilst unchaining man's most violent instincts, with cynical impudence proclaims that there will be neither peace nor welfare on earth until the last remnant of religion has been torn up and until its last representative has been crushed out of existence; as if in this way could be silenced the marvelous concert in which creation chants the glory of its Creator.

CHAPTER TWO

We know very well, Venerable Brethren, that vain are all these efforts, and that in the hour He has established God will arise and His enemies shall be scattered, we know that "the gates of hell shall not prevail," we know that Our Divine Redeemer, as was foretold of Him, "shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked," and for those unhappy beings terrible above all things will be the hour in which they fall "into the hands of the living God." And this unshaken confidence in the final triumph of God and the Church is through the infinite goodness of the Lord, strengthened for us every day by the consoling sight of the generous enthusiasm for God on the part of countless souls in every quarter of the world and in all classes of society. It is indeed a powerful breathing of the Holy Spirit which is now passing over all the earth, drawing especially the souls of the young to the highest Christian ideals, raising them above all human respect, rendering them ready for every sacrifice, even the most heroic, a divine breath that stirs all hearts, even in spite of themselves, and causes them to feel an inward impulse, a real thirst for

God, to be forgiven by those who dare not confess it. It is also true that Our invitation to the laity to take part in the Apostolate of the Hierarchy in the ranks of Catholic Action has been everywhere received with docility and generosity, in the cities and in the country the number is continuously increasing of those who with all their strength devote themselves to the propagation of Christian principles and to their practical application in public life, whilst they themselves strive to confirm their words with the example of their upright lives.

But none the less, confronted with so much impiety, such destruction of all the holiest traditions, such slaughter of immortal souls, such offenses against the Divine Majesty, We cannot, Venerable Brethren, refrain from pouring out the bitter grief of Our soul, We cannot refrain from raising Our voice, and, with all the energy of Our Apostolic heart taking the defense of the downtrodden rights of God, and of the most sacred sentiments of the human heart that has an absolute need of God; and this is all the more since these hostile forces, impelled by the spirit of evil, do not content themselves with mere clamor, but unite all their strength in order to carry out at the first opportunity their nefarious designs. Woe to mankind, if God, thus spurned by His creatures, allows in His justice free course to this devastating flood and uses it as a scourge to chastise the world. It is necessary, therefore, Venerable Brethren, that without faltering we "get up a wall for the house of Israel," that we likewise unite all our forces in one solid, compact line against the battalions of evil, enemies of God no less than of the human race. For in this conflict

there is really question of the fundamental problem of the universe and of the most important decision proposed to man's free will. For God or against God, this once more is the alternative that shall decide the destinies of all mankind in politics, in finance, in morals, in the sciences and arts, in the state, in civil and domestic society. In the East and in the West, everywhere this question confronts us as the deciding factor because of the consequences that flow from it. Thus even the advocates of an altogether materialistic conception of the world, always see rising before them the question of the existence of God, that they thought had been ruled out once and for all, are ever constrained to take up again its discussion.

In the name of the Lord, therefore, We conjure individuals and nations, in the face of such problems and in the throes of a conflict of such vital interest for mankind, to put aside that narrow individualism and base egoism that blinds even the most clear sighted, that withers up all noble initiative as soon as it is no longer confined to a limited circle of paltry and particular interests. Let them all unite together even at the cost of heavy sacrifices, to save themselves and mankind. In such a union of minds and forces, they naturally ought to be the first, who are proud of the Christian name, mindful of the glorious tradition of Apostolic time, when "the multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul." But let all those also loyally and heartily concur, who still believe in God and adore Him, in order to ward off from mankind the great danger that threatens all alike. For in truth, belief in God is the unshaken foundation of all social

order and of all responsible action on earth; and therefore all those who do not want anarchy and terrorism, ought to bestir themselves with a will in order that the enemies of religion may not attain the goal they have so loudly proclaimed to the world.

We are aware, Venerable Brethren, that in this battle for the defense of religion we must make use of all lawful means at our disposal. Therefore following in the wise path of our predecessor Leo XIII of saintly memory in Our Encyclical "*Quadragesimo Anno*" We advocated so energetically a more equitable distribution of the goods of the earth and indicated the most efficacious means of restoring health and strength to the ailing social body, and tranquillity and peace to its suffering members. For the unquenchable aspiration to reach a suitable state of happiness even on earth is planted in the heart of man by the Creator of all things, and Christianity has always recognized and ardently promoted every just effort of true culture and sound progress for the perfecting and developing of mankind.

However, in the face of this satanic hatred of religion, which reminds Us of the "mystery of iniquity" referred to by St. Paul, mere human means and expedients are not enough, and we should consider ourselves wanting in Our Apostolic ministry if We did not point out to mankind those wonderful mysteries of light, that alone contain the hidden strength to subjugate the unchained powers of darkness.

When Our Lord, coming down from the splendors of Thabor, had healed the boy tormented by

the devil, whom the disciples had not been able to cure, to their humble question, "Why could not we cast him out," He made reply in the memorable words "This kind is not cast out but by praying and fasting." It appears to Us, Venerable Brethren, that these divine words find a peculiar application in the evils of our times, that can be averted only by means of prayer and penance.

Mindful then of our condition, that we are essentially limited and absolutely dependent on the Supreme Being, before everything else let us have recourse to prayer. We know through faith how great is the power of humble, trustful, persevering prayer; and to no other pious work have ever been attached such ample, such universal, such solemn promises as to prayer! "Ask and it shall be given you, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you. For everyone that asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." "Amen, amen I say to you if you ask the Father anything in My name He will give it to you."

And what object could be more worthy of our prayer and more in keeping with the adorable person of Him Who is the only "Mediator of God and men, the Man Jesus Christ" than to beseech Him to preserve on earth faith in one God living and true? Such prayer bears already in itself a part of its answer; for in the very act of prayer a man unites himself with God and, so to speak, keeps alive on earth the idea of God. The man who prays, merely by his humble posture professes before the world his faith in the Creator and Lord of all things; joined with others in prayer he recognizes that not

only the individual but human society as a whole has over it a supreme and absolute Lord.

What a spectacle for heaven and earth is not the Church in prayer! For centuries without interruption, from midnight to midnight, is repeated on earth the divine psalmody of the inspired canticles; there is no hour of the day that is not hallowed by its special liturgy; there is no stage of life great or small that has not its part in the thanksgiving, praise, supplication and reparation of the common prayer of the Mystical Body of Christ, which is the Church. Thus prayer of itself assures the presence of God among men, according to the promise of the Divine Redeemer: "Where there are two or three gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."

In addition, prayer will remove the fundamental cause of present day difficulties which We have mentioned above, that is the insatiable greed for earthly goods. The man who prays looks above to the goods of Heaven whereon he meditates and which he desires; his whole being is plunged in the contemplation of the marvelous order established by God, which knows not the frenzy of success and does not lose itself in futile competitions of ever increasing speed; and thus automatically, as it were, will be reestablished that equilibrium between work and rest, whose entire absence from society today is responsible for grave dangers to life physical, economic and moral. If therefore those who through the excessive production of manufactured articles have fallen into unemployment and poverty made up their minds to give the proper time to prayer there is no doubt that work and production would

soon return to reasonable limits and that the conflict which now divides humanity into two great camps struggling for transient interests would be changed into a noble and peaceful contest for goods heavenly and eternal.

In like manner will the way be opened to the peace we long for, as St. Paul beautifully remarks in the passage where he joins the precept of prayer to holy desires for the peace and salvation of all men: "I desire therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made for all men; for kings and all that are in high station, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all piety and chastity. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God Our Saviour, Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of truth." Let peace be implored for all men, but especially for those who in human society have the grave responsibilities of government; for how could they give peace to their peoples if they have it not themselves? And it is prayer precisely that, according to the Apostle will bring the gift of peace; prayer that is addressed to the Heavenly Father who is the Father of all men; prayer that is the common expression of family feelings, of that great family which extends beyond the boundaries of any country and continent.

Men who in every nation pray to the same God for peace on earth cannot be at the same time bearers of discord among peoples; men who turn in prayer to the Divine Majesty cannot foment that nationalistic imperialism which of each people makes its own god; men who look to the "God of Peace and of Love," who turn to Him through the

mediation of Christ, Who is "Our Peace," will know no rest until finally that peace which the world cannot give, comes down from the Giver of Every Good Gift on "men of good will."

"Peace be to you," was the Easter greeting of Our Lord to His Apostles and first disciples; and this blessed greeting from those first times until our day has never been absent from the sacred liturgy of the Church, and today more than ever it should comfort and refresh aching and oppressed human hearts.

CHAPTER THREE

But to prayer we must also join penance, the spirit of penance and the practice of Christian penance. Thus Our Divine Master teaches us, Whose first preaching was precisely penance: "Jesus began to preach and to say, 'Do penance'." The same is the teaching of all Christian tradition, of the whole history of the Church: in the great calamities, in the great tribulations of Christianity, when the need of God's help was most pressing, the faithful either spontaneously or more often following the lead and exhortations of their holy pastors, have always taken in hand the two most mighty weapons of spiritual life—prayer and penance. By that sacred instinct, by which unconsciously, as it were, the Christian people are guided when not led astray by the sowers of tares, and which is none other than that "Mind of Christ" of which the Apostle speaks, the faithful have always felt immediately in such cases the need of purifying their souls from sin with contrition of heart, with the

sacrament of reconciliation and of appeasing divine justice with external works of penance as well.

Certainly We know, and with you, Venerable Brethren, We deplore the fact that in our day the idea and the name of expiation and penance have with many lost in great part the power of rousing enthusiasm of heart and heroism of sacrifice. In other times they were able to inspire such feelings, for they appeared in the eyes of men of faith as sealed with a divine mark in likeness of Christ and His Saints: but nowadays there are some who would put aside external mortifications as things of the past; without mentioning the modern "autonomous man" who despises penance as bearing the mark of servitude. As a fact the notion of the need of penance and expiation is lost in proportion as belief in God is weakened, and the idea of an original sin and of a first rebellion of man against God becomes confused and disappears.

But We on the other hand, Venerable Brethren, have the duty of the Pastoral Office of bearing aloft these names and ideas and of preserving them in their true meaning, in their genuine dignity, and still more in their practical and necessary application to Christian life. To this We are urged by the very defense of God and religion, which We sustain, since penance is of its nature a recognition and reestablishment of the moral order in the world that is founded on the eternal law, that is on the living God. He who makes satisfaction to God for sin recognizes thereby the sanctity of the highest principles of morality, their internal binding power, the need of a sanction against their violation. Certainly one of the most dangerous errors

of our age is the claim to separate morality from religion; thus removing all solid basis for any legislation. This intellectual error might perhaps have passed unnoticed and appeared less dangerous when it was confined to a few, and belief in God was still the common heritage of mankind, and was tacitly presumed even in the case of those who no longer professed it openly. But today, when atheism is spreading through the masses of the people, the practical consequences of such an error become dreadfully tangible, and realities of the saddest kind make their appearance in the world.

In place of moral laws which disappear together with the loss of faith in God, brute force is imposed trampling on every right. Old time fidelity and honesty of conduct and mutual intercourse extolled so much even by the orators and poets of paganism, now give place to speculations in one's own affairs as in those of others without reference to conscience. In fact, how can any contract be maintained and what value can any treaty have, in which every guarantee of conscience is lacking? And how can there be talk of guarantees of conscience when all faith in God and all fear of God has vanished? Take away this basis, and with it all moral law falls, and there is no remedy left to stop the gradual but inevitable destruction of peoples, families, the state, civilization itself.

Penance then is, as it were, a salutary weapon placed in the hands of the valiant soldiers of Christ, who wish to fight for the defense and restoration of the moral order in the universe. It is a weapon that strikes at the root of all evil, that is, at the dust of material wealth and the wanton pleasures

of life. By means of voluntary sacrifices, by means of practical and even painful acts of self denial, by means of various works of penance, the noble-hearted Christian subdues the base passions that tend to make him violate the moral order. But if zeal for divine law and brotherly love are as great in him as they should be, then not only does he practice penance for himself and his own sins, but he takes upon himself the expiation of the sins of whole generations, imitating even the Divine Redeemer, Who became the Lamb of God "Who taketh away the sins of the world."

Is there not perchance, Venerable Brethren, in this spirit of penance also a sweet mystery of peace? "There is no peace to the wicked" says the Holy Spirit, because they live in continuous struggle and conflict with the order established by nature and by its Creator. Only when this order is restored, when all peoples faithfully and spontaneously recognize and profess it, when the internal conditions of peoples and their outward relations with other nations are founded on this basis, then only will stable peace be possible on earth. But to create this atmosphere of lasting peace, neither peace treaties, nor the most solemn pacts, nor international meetings or conferences, not even the noblest and most disinterested efforts of any statesman will be enough unless in the first place are recognized the sacred rights of natural and divine law. No leader in public economy, no power of organization will even be able to bring social conditions to a peaceful solution, unless first in the very field of economics there triumphs moral law based on God and conscience. This is the underlying value of

every value in the political life as well as in the economic life of nations; this is the soundest "rate of exchange." If it is kept steady all the rest will be stable, being guaranteed by the immutable and eternal law of God.

And even for men individually, penance is the foundation and bearer of true peace detaching them from earthly and perishable goods, lifting them up to goods that are eternal, giving them, even in the midst of privations and adversity, a peace that the world with all its wealth and pleasures cannot give. One of the most pleasing and joyous songs ever heard in this vale of tears is without doubt the famous "Canticle of the Sun" of St. Francis. Now the man who composed it, who wrote and sang it, was one of the greatest penitents, the Poor Man of Assisi, who possessed absolutely nothing on earth, and bore in his emaciated body the painful stigmata of his crucified Lord.

Prayer then and penance are the two potent inspirations sent to us at this time by God, that we may lead back to Him mankind that has gone astray and wanders about without a guide; they are the inspirations that will dispel and remedy the first and principal cause of every revolt and every revolution, the revolt of man against God. But the peoples themselves are called upon to make up their minds to a definite choice; either they entrust themselves to these benevolent and beneficent inspirations and are converted, humble and repentant, to the Lord and the Father of Mercies, or they abandon themselves and what little remains of happiness on earth to the mercy of the enemy of God, to the spirit of vengeance and destruction.

Nothing remains for Us therefore save to invite this poor world that has shed so much blood, has dug so many graves, has destroyed so many works, has deprived so many men of bread and labor, nothing else remains for Us, We say, but to invite it in the loving words of the sacred liturgy: "Be thou converted to the Lord thy God."

CHAPTER FOUR

What more suitable occasion can We point out to you, Venerable Brethren, for such a union of prayer and reparation than the approaching Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus? The proper spirit of this solemnity, as we amply showed four years ago in Our Encyclical Letter, "*Miserentissimum*" is the spirit of loving reparation, and therefore it was Our will that on that day every year in perpetuity there should be made in all the Churches of the world a public act of reparation for all the offenses that wound that Divine Heart.

Let therefore this year the Feast of the Sacred Heart be for the whole Church one of holy rivalry of reparation and supplication. Let the faithful hasten in large numbers to the Eucharistic Board, hasten to the foot of the altar to adore the Redeemer of the World, under the veils of the Sacrament, that you, Venerable Brethren, will have solemnly exposed that day in all the churches, let them pour out to that Merciful Heart that has known all the griefs of the human heart, the fullness of their sorrow, the steadfastness of their faith, the trust of their hope, the ardor of their charity. Let them pray to Him, interposing likewise the powerful patronage of the Blessed Virgin

Mary, Mediatrix of All Graces, for themselves and for their families, for their country, for the Church; let them pray to Him for the Vicar of Christ on Earth and for all the other pastors who share with him the dread burden of the spiritual government of souls; let them pray for their brethren who believe, for their brethren who err, for believers, for infidels, even for the enemies of God and the Church that they may be converted, and let them pray for the whole of poor mankind.

Let this spirit of prayer and reparation be maintained with keen earnestness and intensity by all the faithful during the entire octave, to which dignity we have determined to raise this feast; and during this octave, in the manner that each of you, Venerable Brethren, according to local circumstances, shall think opportune to prescribe or counsel, let there be public prayers and other devout exercises of piety for the intentions We have briefly touched on above, "that we may obtain mercy and find grace in seasonable aid."

May this be indeed for the whole Christian people an octave of reparation and of holy sadness; let these be days of mortification and of prayer. Let the faithful abstain at least from entertainments and amusements however lawful; let those who are in easier circumstances deduct also something voluntarily, in the spirit of Christian austerity, from the moderate measure of their usual manner of life, bestowing rather on the poor the proceeds of this retrenchment, since almsgiving is also an excellent means of satisfying divine justice and drawing down divine mercies. And let the poor, and all those who at this time are facing the

hard trial of want of work and scarcity of food, let them in a like spirit of penance offer with greater resignation the privations imposed on them by these hard times and the state of society, which Divine Providence in an inscrutable but ever loving plan has assigned them. Let them accept with a humble and trustful heart from the hand of God the effects of poverty, rendered harder by the distress in which mankind is now struggling; let them rise more generously even to the divine sublimity of the Cross of Christ, reflecting on the fact that if work is among the greatest values of life, it was nevertheless love of a suffering God that saved the world; let them take comfort in the certainty that their sacrifices and their troubles borne in a Christian spirit will concur efficaciously to hasten the hour of mercy and peace.

The Divine Heart of Jesus cannot but be moved at the prayers and sacrifices of His Church, and He will finally say to His spouse, weeping at His feet under the weight of so many griefs and woes: "Great is thy faith; be it done to thee as thou wilt." With this confidence, strengthened by the memory of the Cross, sacred symbol and precious instrument of our holy redemption, the glorious invention of which we celebrate today, to you Venerable Brethren, to your clergy and people, to the whole Catholic world, We impart with paternal love the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, on the Feast of The Invention of The Holy Cross, the third of May in the year of 1932, the eleventh of our Pontificate.

PIUS PP. XI.

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Encyclical Letter

TO THE

ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS AND ORDINARIES OF MEXICO

ON

The New Persecutions of the Church By the Mexican Government

POPE PIUS XI

Venerable Brethren, Health and Apostolic Benediction:

THE concern and sorrow which We feel at the present sad plight of human society at large do in no way lessen Our special solicitude for Our beloved sons of the Mexican nation and for you, Venerable Brethren, who are the more deserving of Our paternal regard because you have been so long harassed by grievous persecutions.

From the beginning of Our pontificate, following the example of Our Venerable Predecessor, We endeavored with all Our might to ward off the application of those constitutional statutes which the Holy See had several times been obliged to condemn as seriously derogatory to the most elementary and inalienable rights of the Church and of the faithful. With this intent, We provided that Our representative should take up his residence in your Republic.

But whereas other governments in recent times

have been eager to renew agreements with the Holy See, that of Mexico frustrated every attempt to arrive at an understanding—on the contrary, it most unexpectedly broke the promises made to Us shortly before in writing, banishing repeatedly Our representatives and showing thereby its animosity against the Church. Thus a most rigorous application was given to Article 130 of the Constitution, against which, on account of its extreme hostility to the Church, as may be seen from our Encyclical *Iniquis Afflictisque,* of November 18, 1926, the Holy See had to protest in the most solemn manner.

Heavy penalties were then enacted against the transgressors of this deplorable Article; and as a fresh affront to the Hierarchy of the Church, it was provided that every State of the Confederation should determine the number of priests empowered to exercise the sacred ministry, in public or in private.

UNJUST AND INTOLLERABLE INJUNCTIONS

In view of these unjust and intolerant injunctions, which would have subjected the Church in Mexico to the despotism of the State and of the Government hostile to the Catholic Religion, you determined, Venerable Brethren, to suspend public worship, and at the same time called on the faithful to make efficacious protest against the unjust procedure of the Government. For your apostolic firmness, you were nearly all exiled from the Republic, and from the land of your banishment you had to witness the struggles and martyrdom of your priests and of your flock, while those very few amongst you who, almost by miracle, were

able to remain in hiding in their own dioceses succeeded in effectively encouraging the faithful with the splendid example of their own undaunted spirit.

COURAGE OF CLERGY COMMENDED

Of these events We took occasion to speak in solemn Allocutions, in public discourses, and more at length in the above-mentioned Encyclical *Iniquis Afflictisque,* and we were comforted by the world's admiration for the courage displayed by the clergy in administering the Sacraments to the faithful, amid a thousand dangers, and at the risk of their lives, and for the like heroism of many of the faithful, who at the cost of unheard-of sufferings and enormous sacrifices gave valiant assistance to their priests.

Meanwhile, We did not forbear to encourage with word and counsel the lawful Christian resistance of the priests and the faithful, exhorting them to placate, by penance and prayer, God's justice, that in His merciful Providence He might shorten the time of trial. At the same time, We invited Our sons throughout the world to unite their prayers to Ours in behalf of their brethren in Mexico; and wonderful were the ardor and wholeheartedness with which they responded to Our appeal.

Nor did we neglect to have recourse, besides, to the human means at Our disposal, in order to give assistance to Our beloved sons. Whilst addressing Our appeal to the Catholic world to give help and generous alms to their persecuted Mexican brethren, We urged the governments with whom We

have diplomatic relations to take to heart the abnormal and grievous condition of so many of the faithful.

HARM DUE TO SUSPENSION OF PUBLIC WORSHIP

In the face of the firm and generous resistance of the oppressed, the Government now began to give indications in various ways that it would not be adverse to coming to an agreement, if only to put an end to a condition of affairs that it could not turn to its own advantage. Whereupon, though taught by painful experiences to put scant trust in such promises, we felt obliged to ask Ourselves whether it was for the good of souls to prolong the suspension of public worship. That suspension had indeed been an effective protest against the arbitrary interference of the Government; nevertheless, its continuation might have seriously prejudiced civil and religious order. Of even greater weight was the consideration that this suspension, according to grave reports We received from various and unimpeachable sources, was productive of serious harm to the faithful. As these were bereft of spiritual helps necessary for Christian life, and not infrequently were obliged to omit their religious duties, they ran the risk of first remaining apart from and then being entirely separated from the priesthood, and in consequence from the very sources of supernatural life. To this must be added the fact that the prolonged absence of almost all the Bishops from their dioceses could not fail to bring about a relaxation of ecclesiastical discipline, especially in times of such great tribulation for the Mexican Church, when clergy and

people had particular need of the guidance of those "whom the Holy Ghost has placed to rule the Church of God."

When, therefore, in 1929, the Supreme Magistrate of Mexico publicly declared that the Government, by applying the laws in question, had no intention of destroying the "Identity of the Church" or of ignoring the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, We thought it best, having no other intention but the good of souls, to profit by the occasion, which seemed to offer a possibility of having the rights of the Hierarchy duly recognized. Seeing, therefore, some hope of remedying greater evils, and judging that the principal motives that had induced the Episcopate to suspend public worship no longer existed, We asked Ourselves whether it were not advisable to order its resumption. In this there was no intention, certainly, of accepting the Mexican regulations of worship, nor of withdrawing Our protests against these regulations, much less of ceasing to combat them. It was merely a question of abandoning, in view of the Government's new declarations, one of the methods of resistance before it could bring harm to the faithful, and of having recourse instead to others deemed more opportune.

Penalization of Faithful Catholics

Unfortunately, as all know, Our wishes and desires were not followed by the peace and favorable settlement We had hoped for. On the contrary, Bishops, priests and faithful Catholics continued to be penalized and imprisoned contrary to the spirit in which the *Modus Vivendi* had been established.

To Our great distress We saw that not merely were all Bishops not recalled from exile, but that others were expelled without even the semblance of legality. In several dioceses neither churches, seminaries, Bishops' residences, nor other sacred edifices were restored; notwithstanding explicit promises, priests and laymen who had steadfastly defended the Faith were abandoned to the cruel vengeance of their adversaries.

Furthermore, as soon as the suspension of public worship had been revoked, increased violence was noticed in the campaign of the press against clergy, Church and God Himself; and it is well known that the Holy See had to condemn one of these publications, which in its sacrilegious immorality and acknowledged purpose of anti-religious and slanderous propaganda had exceeded all bounds.

DANGERS OF IRRELIGIOUS AND IMMORAL TEACHINGS

Add to this that not only is religious instruction forbidden in the primary schools, but not infrequently attempts are made to induce those, whose duty it is to educate the future generations, to become purveyors of irreligious and immoral teachings, thus obliging the parents to make heavy sacrifices in order to safeguard the innocence of their children. We bless with all Our heart these Christian parents and all the good teachers who help them, and We urge upon you, Venerable Brethren: upon the clergy, secular and regular, and upon all the faithful the necessity of giving utmost attention to the question of education and the formation of the young—especially among the poorer classes, since they are most exposed to atheist, Masonic and

communistic propaganda—persuading yourselves that your country will be such as you build it up in the children.

LIMITATION OF CLERGY PROTESTED

An effort has been made to strike the Church in a still more vital spot, viz., in the existence of the clergy and the Catholic Hierarchy, by trying to eliminate it gradually from the Republic. Thus the Mexican Constitution, as We have several times deplored, while proclaiming liberty of thought and conscience, prescribes with the most evident contradiction that each State of the Federal Republic must determine the number of priests to whom the exercise of the sacred ministry is allowed, not only in public churches but even within private dwellings. This enormity is further aggravated by the way in which the law is applied.

In fact, the Constitution lays down that the number of priests must be determined, but ordains that this determination must correspond to the religious needs of the faithful and of the locality. It does not prescribe that the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy is to be ignored in this matter, and this point was explicitly recognized in the declarations of the *Modus Vivendi.* Now in the State of Michoacan one priest was assigned for every 33,000 of the faithful, in the State of Chiapas one for every 60,000, while in the State of Vera Cruz only one priest was to exercise the sacred ministry for every 100,000 of the inhabitants. Everyone can see whether it is possible with such restrictions to administer the Sacraments to so many people scattered for the most part over a vast territory.

Indeed the persecutors, as though sorry for having been too liberal and indulgent, have imposed further limitations. Some Governors closed seminaries, confiscated canonries, and determined the sacred buildings and the territory to which the ministry of the approved priests would be restricted.

RECOGNITION OF HIERARCHY DENIED BY STATE

The clearest manifestation of the will to destroy the Catholic Church itself is, however, the explicit declaration published in some States that the civil authority, in granting the license for priestly ministry, recognizes no Hierarchy, on the contrary positively excludes from the possibility of exercising the sacred ministry all of hierarchic rank, viz., all Bishops and even those who have held the office of Apostolic Delegate.

We wished briefly to rehearse the salient points in the grievous condition of the Church in Mexico, so that all lovers of order and peace among nations, on seeing that such an unheard-of persecution differs but little, especially in certain States, from the one raging within the unhappy borders of Russia, may from this iniquitous similarity of purpose conceive fresh ardor to steam the torrent that is subverting all social order.

At the same time, it is Our intention to give a new proof to you, Venerable Brethren, and to all Our beloved sons of Mexico, of the paternal solicitude with which We follow you in your tribulation: the same solicitude that inspired the instructions which We gave you last January through Our beloved son, the Cardinal Secretary of State, and

which were communicated to you by our Apostolic Delegate. In matters strictly connected with religion, it is undoubtedly Our duty and Our right to establish the reasons and norms that all who glory in the name of Catholics are under the obligation of obeying.

In this connection We are anxious to recall to mind that when We issued these instructions, We gave due consideration to all the reports and advices that came to Us either from the Hierarchy or the faithful. We say all—even those that appeared to counsel a return to a severer line of conduct, with the total suspension of public worship throughout the Republic, as in 1926.

Wisdom of Mexican Hierarchy Praised

Concerning, therefore, the conduct to follow, since the number of priests is not equally limited in every State, nor the rights of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy everywhere equally disregarded, it is evident that according to the different applications of the unhappy decrees, different likewise must be the conduct of the Church and the Catholics. Here it seems just to pay a special tribute to praise to those Mexican Bishops who, according to advices received, have wisely interpreted the instructions We have inculcated time and again. To this We wish to call attention; for if some, urged rather by zeal for the defense of their own Faith than by prudence so necessary in delicate situations, may from diverse conduct in diverse circumstances have concluded that there have been contradictory judgments on the part of the Bishops, let them now be certain that such an accusation is utterly unfounded.

Nevertheless, since any restriction whatever of the number of priests is a grave violation of Divine rights, it will be necessary for the Bishops, the clergy and the Catholic laity to continue to protest with all their energy against such violation, using every legitimate means. For even if these protests have no effect on those that govern the country, they will be effective in persuading the faithful, especially the uneducated, that by such action the State attacks the liberty of the Church, which liberty the Church can never renounce, no matter what may be the violence of the persecutors.

PERSECUTION OF CHURCH OUTRAGE AGAINST GOD

And therefore, just as We have read with satisfaction the protests recently made by the Bishops and priests of the dioceses that are victims of the deplorable measures of the Government, so We join Our protests to yours before the whole world, and in a special manner before the rulers of the nations, to make them realize that the persecution of Mexico, besides being an outrage against God, against His Church, and against the conscience of a Catholic people, is also an incentive to the subversion of the social order, which is the aim of those organizations that profess to deny God.

Meanwhile, in order to remedy to some extent the calamitous conditions that afflict the Church in Mexico, we must avail Ourselves of those means which We still have in hand, so that by the maintenance of Divine worship as far as possible in every place, the light of faith and the sacred fire of charity may not be extinguished among those unhappy populations. Certainly the laws are iniquitous;

they are impious, as We have already said, and condemned by God for everything that they iniquitously and impiously derogate from the rights of God and of the Church in the government of souls.

Nevertheless, it would be a vain and unfounded fear to think that one is cooperating with these iniquitous legislative ordinances which oppress him, were he to ask the Government that imposes these things for permission to carry out public worship—and hence to hold that it is one's duty to refrain absolutely from making such a request. Such an erroneous opinion and conduct might lead to a total suspension of public worship, and would without doubt inflict grievous harm on the entire flock of the faithful.

Approval of Iniquitious Laws Illicit

It is well to observe that to approve such an iniquitous law, or spontaneously to give to it true and proper cooperation, is undoubtedly illicit and sacrilegious. But absolutely different is the case of him who yields to such unjust regulations solely against his will and under protest, and who on the other hand does everything he can to lessen the disastrous effects of the pernicious law. In fact, the priest finds himself compelled to ask for that permission, without which it would be impossible for him to exercise his sacred ministry for the good of souls; it is an imposition to which he is forced to submit in order to avoid a greater evil. His behavior consequently is not much different from that of one who, having been robbed of his belongings, is obliged to ask his unjust despoiler for at least the use of them.

In truth, the danger of formal cooperation, or of any approval whatever of the present law, is removed, as far as is necessary, by the protests energetically expressed by this Apostolic See, by the whole Episcopate, and by the people of Mexico. To these are added the precautions of the priest himself, who although already appointed to the sacred ministry by his own Bishop, is obliged to ask the Government for the possibility of holding Divine service, and far from approving the law that unjustly imposes such a request, submits to it materially, as the saying is, and only in order to remove an obstacle to the exercise of the sacred ministry; an obstacle that would lead, as we have said, to a total cessation of worship, and hence to exceedingly great harm to innumerable souls. In much the same manner the faithful and the sacred ministers of the early Church, as history relates, sought permission, by means of gifts even, to visit and comfort the martyrs detained in prison and to administer the Sacraments to them; yet surely no one could have thought that by so doing they in some way approved or justified the conduct of the persecutors.

WARNS AGAINST DISOBEDIENCE AND OBSTINACY

Such is the certain and safe doctrine of the Church. If, however, the putting of it into practice should cause scandal to some of the faithful, it will be your duty, Venerable Brethren, to enlighten them carefully and exactly. If after you have performed this office of explanation and persuasion, according to these Our directions, anyone should cling stubbornly to his own false opinion,

let him know that he can hardly escape the reproach of disobedience and obstinacy.

Let all then continue in that unity of purpose and obedience that We have praised in the clergy on another occasion at length and with lively satisfaction. And putting aside all uncertainties and fears, easily understood in the first moments of the persecution, let the priests with their proved spirit of abnegation render ever more intense their sacred ministry, particularly among the young and the common people, striving to carry on a work of persuasion and of charity especially among the enemies of the Church, who combat Her because they do not know Her.

RECOMMENDS FURTHER EXTENSION OF CATHOLIC ACTION

And here we recommend anew a point that We have greatly at heart, viz., the necessity of instituting and furthering to an ever greater extent Catholic Action, according to the directions communicated at Our command by Our Apostolic Delegate. This is undoubtedly a difficult undertaking in its first stages, and especially in the present circumstances, an undertaking slow at times in producing the desired effects, but necessary and much more efficacious than any other means, as is abundantly proved by the experience of every nation that has been tried in the crucible of religious persecution.

To Our beloved Mexican sons We recommend with all Our heart the closest union with the Church and the Hierarchy, manifesting it by their docility to Her teachings and directions. Let them

not neglect to have recourse to the Sacraments, sources of grace and strength: let them instruct themselves in the truths of religion; let them implore mercy from God on their unhappy nation; and let them make it both a duty and an honor to cooperate with the apostolate of the priesthood in the ranks of Catholic Action.

GIVES PRAISE TO CLERGY AND LAITY

We wish to pay a special tribute of praise to those members of the clergy, secular and regular, and of the Catholic laity, who, moved by burning zeal for religion and maintaining themselves in close obedience to this Apostolic See, have written glorious pages in the recent history of the Church in Mexico. At the same time We exhort them earnestly in the Lord to continue to defend the sacred rights of the Church with that generous abnegation of which they have given such a splendid example, always following the norms laid down by this Apostolic See.

We cannot conclude without turning in a very special manner to you, Venerable Brethren, who are the faithful interpreters of Our thoughts. We wish to tell you that We feel all the more closely united to you, in proportion to the hardships you are meeting with in your apostolic ministry. We are certain that, being so close to the heart of the Vicar of Christ, you will draw comfort and strength from this knowledge to persevere in the holy and arduous enterprise of leading to salvation the flock entrusted to you.

And that the Grace of God may ever assist you and His mercy support you, with all paternal af-

fection We impart to you and to Our beloved sons so sorely tried, the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome, at Saint Peter's, on the Feast of the Dedication of Saint Michael, the Archangel, the twenty-ninth day of September, in the year 1932, the eleventh of Our Pontificate.

PIUS PP. XI.

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THE CATHOLIC PRIESTHOOD

Encyclical Letter of His Holiness, Pope Pius XI

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Encyclical Letter

("*Ad Catholici Sacerdotii*")

TO OUR VENERABLE BRETHREN
THE PATRIARCHS PRIMATES ARCHBISHOPS BISHOPS
AND OTHER ORDINARIES IN PEACE
AND COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE

On The Catholic Priesthood

POPE PIUS XI

VENERABLE BRETHREN
GREETINGS AND APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION

BY THE inscrutable design of Divine Providence We were raised to this summit of the Catholic priesthood. From that moment Our thoughts were turned to all the innumerable children whom God entrusted to Us. Yet, in a special way, We have felt an affectionate and earnest solicitude towards those who have the commission to be "the salt of the earth and the light of the world," [1] for those who have been singled out and adorned by the priestly character. In a still more special way Our thoughts have turned towards those dearly beloved young students who are being educated in the shadow of the sanctuary and are preparing themselves for this most noble charge, the priesthood.

Even in the first months of Our Pontificate, be-

[1] Cf. MATTH., V, 13, 14.

fore We had addressed Our solemn word to the whole Catholic world,[2] We hastened to lay stress upon the principles and ideals which ought to guide and inspire the education of future priests. This We did by Our Apostolic Letter *Officiorum omnium* [3] written on the first of August 1922 to Our beloved son the Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Seminaries and Universities. And whenever Our pastoral watchfulness prompts Us to consider more in particular the good estate and the needs of the Church, Our attention is directed always, and before all things else, to Priests and Clergy.

INTEREST IN THE PRIESTHOOD

Nor is there lacking witness to this Our special interest in the priesthood. For We have erected many new Seminaries; and others We have, at great expense, provided with new and befitting buildings, or endowed more liberally with revenues or staff, that they may the more worthily attain their high aim.

Upon the occasion of Our Sacerdotal Jubilee, We allowed that event, so blessed in its memories, to be celebrated with some solemnity, and We even encouraged with Fatherly gratification the marks of filial affection which came to Us from every part of the globe. Our reason was that We regarded this celebration not so much as a homage to Our Person, as a dutiful tribute of honour to the dignity of the priestly character.

Similarly, We decreed a reform of studies in

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[2] Litt. Encycl. *Ubi arcano*, 22 Dec. 1922.

[3] *A. A. S.*, vol. XIV (1922), p. 449 sqq.

ecclesiastical Faculties, by the Apostolic Constitution *Deus scientiarum Dominus,* of the twenty-fourth of May 1931. Our special purpose in this decree was to make even broader and higher the culture and learning of priests.[4]

SUBJECT WORTHY OF SPECIAL ENCYCLICAL

This matter, indeed, is of so great and universal importance that We think fitting to devote to it a special Encyclical; since it is Our desire that the faithful, who already possess the priceless gift of Faith, may appreciate the sublimity of the Catholic Priesthood and its providential mission in the world; that those, too, who do not yet possess the Faith, but with uprightness and sincerity are in search of Truth, may share this appreciation with the faithful; above all, that those who are themselves called may have still deeper understanding and esteem of their vocation. This subject is particularly opportune at the present moment, for it is the end of the year which has seen extended, beyond the Eternal City to the whole Catholic world, the Jubilee of the Redemption. This Extraordinary Jubilee, at Lourdes, came, like a sunset, to a splendid close. There, under the mantle of the Immaculate, for a fervent and uninterrupted Eucharistic Triduum, gathered together Catholic clergy of every tongue and rite. Our beloved and venerated priests, never more energetic in well-doing than during this special Holy Year, are the ministers of the Redemption of which this year was the Jubilee. Moreover, this year, as We said

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[4] *A. A. S.*, vol. XXIII (1931), p. 241 sqq.

in the Apostolic Constitution *Quod nuper,*[5] commemorated, likewise, the nineteenth centenary of the institution of the priesthood.

PRIEST AN APOSTLE OF EDUCATION

Our previous Encyclicals were directed to throwing the light of Catholic doctrine upon the gravest of the problems peculiar to modern life. Our present Encyclical finds a natural place among these others, opportunity supplementing them. The priest is, indeed, both by vocation and divine commission, the chief Apostle and tireless furtherer of the Christian education of youth;[6] in the name of God, the priest blesses Christian marriage, and defends its sanctity and indissolubility against the attacks and evasions suggested by cupidity and sensuality;[7] the priest contributes most effectively to the solution, or at least the mitigation, of social conflicts, since he preaches Christian brotherhood, declares to all their mutual obligations of justice and charity, brings peace to hearts embittered by moral and economic hardship, and alike to rich and poor points out the only true riches to which all men both can and should aspire.[8] Finally, the priest is the most valorous leader in that crusade of expiation and penance to which We have invited all men of good will.[9] For there is need of reparation for the blasphemies, wickedness and crimes which dishonour humanity today,

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[5] *A. A. S.*, vol. XXV (1933), p. 5-10.

[6] Litt. Encycl. *Divini illius Magistri,* 31 Dec. 1929.

[7] Litt. Encycl. *Casti connubii,* 31 Dec. 1930.

[8] Litt. Encycl. *Quadragesimo anno,* 15 May 1931.

[9] Litt. Encycl. *Caritate Christi,* 3 May 1932.

an age perhaps unparalleled in its need for the mercy and pardon of God. The enemies of the Church themselves well know the vital importance of the priesthood; for against the priesthood in particular, as We have already had to lament in the case of Our dear Mexico,[10] they direct the point of their attacks. It is the priesthood they desire to be rid of; that they may clear the way for that destruction of the Church, which has been so often attempted yet never achieved.

I.

OFFICE AND POWER OF THE PRIEST

THE human race has always felt the need of a priesthood: of men, that is, who have the official charge to be mediators between God and humanity, men who should consecrate themselves entirely to this mediation, as to the very purpose of their lives, men set aside to offer to God public prayers and sacrifices in the name of human society. For human society as such is bound to offer to God public and social worship. It is bound to acknowledge in Him its supreme Lord and first beginning, and to strive toward Him as to its last end, to give Him thanks and offer Him propitiation. In fact, priests are to be found among all peoples whose customs are known, except those compelled by violence to act against the most sacred laws of human nature. They may, indeed, be in the service of false divinities; but wherever

[10] Litt. Encycl. *Acerbi animi*, 29 Sept. 1932.

religion is professed, wherever altars are built, there also is a priesthood surrounded by particular marks of honour and veneration.

Yet in the splendour of Divine Revelation the priest is seen invested with a dignity far greater still. This dignity was foreshadowed of old by the venerable and mysterious figure of Melchisedech,[11] Priest and King, whom St. Paul recalls as prefiguring the Person and Priesthood of Christ Our Lord Himself.[12]

ST. PAUL'S MAGNIFICENT DEFINITION

The priest, according to the magnificent definition given by St. Paul, is indeed a man *Ex hominibus assumptus,* "taken from amongst men," yet *pro hominibus constituitur in his quae sunt ad Deum,* "ordained for men in the things that appertain to God": his office is not for human things, and things that pass away, however lofty and valuable these may seem; but for things divine and enduring. These eternal things may, perhaps, through ignorance, be scorned and contemned, or even attacked with diabolical fury and malice, as sad experience has often proved, and proves even today; but they always continue to hold the first place in the aspirations, individual and social, of humanity, because the human heart feels irresistibly it is made for God and is restless till it rests in Him.

The Old Law, inspired by God and promulgated by Moses, set up a priesthood, which was, in this manner, of divine institution; and determined for

[11] Cf. *Gen.,* XIV, 18.

[12] Cf. *Hebr.,* V, 10; VI, 20; VII, 1, 1-11, 15.

it every detail of its duty, residence and rite. It would seem that God, in His great care for them, wished to impress upon the still primitive mind of the Jewish people one great central idea. This idea throughout the history of the chosen people, was to shed its light over all events, laws, ranks and offices: the idea of sacrifice and priesthood. These were to become, through faith in the future Messias,[13] a source of hope, glory, power and spiritual liberation. The temple of Solomon, astonishing in richness and splendour, was still more wonderful in its rites and ordinances. Erected to the one true God as a tabernacle of the divine Majesty upon earth, it was also a sublime poem sung to that sacrifice and that priesthood, which, though type and symbol, was still so august, that the sacred figure of its High Priest moved the conqueror Alexander the Great, to bow in reverence;[14] and God Himself visited His wrath upon the impious king Baltassar because he made revel with the sacred vessels of the temple.[15] Yet that ancient priesthood derived its greatest majesty and glory from being a foretype of the Christian priesthood; the priesthood of the New and eternal Covenant sealed with the Blood of the Redeemer of the world, Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.

SUMMARY OF THE CHRISTIAN PRIESTHOOD

The Apostle of the Gentiles thus perfectly sums up what may be said of the greatness, the dignity

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[13] Cf. *Hebr.*, Ch. XI.

[14] Cf. Jos. FLAV., *Antiquit.*, Book XI, ch. 8, n. 5 (edit. Teubner, III, 61, n. 331).

[15] Cf. DANIEL, V, 1-30.

and the duty of the Christian priesthood: *Sic nos existimet homo ut ministros Christi et dispensatores mysteriorum Dei*—"Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God." [16] The priest is the minister of Christ, an instrument, that is to say, in the hands of the Divine Redeemer. He continues the work of the redemption in all its world-embracing universality and divine efficacy, that work that wrought so marvellous a transformation in the world. Thus the priest, as is said with good reason, is indeed "another Christ"; for, in some way, he is himself a continuation of Christ. "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you," [17] is spoken to the priest, and hence the priest, like Christ, continues to give "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will." [18]

TEACHING OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

For, in the first place, as the Council of Trent teaches, Jesus Christ at the last Supper instituted the sacrifice and the priesthood of the new Covenant: "our Lord and God, although once and for all, by means of His death on the altar of the cross, He was to offer Himself to God the Father, that thereon He might accomplish eternal redemption; yet because death was not to put an end to His priesthood,[19] at the last Supper, the same night in which He was betrayed,[20] in order to leave to

[16] *I Cor.*, IV, 1.
[17] JOHN, XX, 21.
[18] LUKE, II, 14.
[19] *Hebr.*, 7, 24.
[20] *I Cor.*, XI, 23.

His beloved spouse the Church, a sacrifice which should be visible (as the nature of man requires), which should represent that bloody sacrifice, once and for all to be completed on the cross, which should perpetuate His memory to the end of time,[21] and which should apply its saving power unto the remission of sins we daily commit, showing Himself made a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech,[22] offered to God the Father, under the appearance of bread and wine, His body and blood, giving them to the Apostles (whom He was then making priests of the New Covenant) to be consumed under the signs of these same things, and commanded the Apostles and their successors in the priesthood to offer them, by the words 'Do this in commemoration of me.' " [23]

OBLATION FORETOLD BY MALACHY

And thenceforth, the Apostles, and their successors in the priesthood, began to lift to heaven that "clean oblation" foretold by Malachy,[24] through which the name of God is great among the gentiles. And now, that same oblation, in every part of the world and at every hour of the day and night, is offered and will continue to be offered without interruption till the end of time: a true sacrificial act, not merely symbolical, which has a real efficacy unto the reconciliation of sinners with the Divine Majesty:

"Appeased by this oblation, the Lord grants

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[21] *I Cor.*, XI, 24 sqq.

[22] *Ps. CIX*, 4.

[23] LUKE, XXII, 19; *I Cor.*, XI, 24 — S. Conc. Trid., Sess. 22, cap. 1.

[24] MAL., I, 11.

grace and the gift of repentance, and forgives iniquities and sins, however great." [25] The reason of this is given by the same Council in these words: "For there is one and the same host, there is present the same Christ Who once offered Himself upon the Cross, who now offers Himself by the ministry of priests, only the manner of the offering being different." [26]

And thus the ineffable greatness of the human priest stands forth in all its splendour; for he has power over the very body of Jesus Christ, and makes it present upon our altars. In the name of Christ Himself he offers it a victim infinitely pleasing to the Divine Majesty. "Wonderous things are these," justly exclaims St. John Chrysostom, "so wonderful, they surpass wonder." [27]

POWER OVER CHRIST'S MYSTICAL BODY

Besides this power over the real Body of Christ, the priest has received other powers, august and sublime, over His mystical body. There is no need, My Venerable Brethren, to enlarge upon the beautiful doctrine of the mystical body of Christ, a doctrine so dear to St. Paul; this beautiful doctrine that shows us the Person of the Word made flesh in union with all His brethren. For from Him to them comes a supernatural influence, so that they, with Him as Head, form a single body of which they are the members. Now a priest is the appointed "dispenser of the mysteries of God," [28] for

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[25] Conc. Trid., Sess. XXII, cap. 2.

[26] Ibid.

[27] ST. JOHN CHRYS., *De sacerdotio*, lib. III, 4 (MIGNE, *P. G.*, 48, 642).

[28] *I Cor.*, IV, 1.

the benefit of the members of the mystical body of Christ; since he is the ordinary minister of nearly all the Sacraments,—those channels through which the grace of the Saviour flows for the good of humanity. The Christian, at almost every important stage of his mortal career, finds at his side the priest with power received from God, in the act of communicating or increasing that grace which is the supernatural life of his soul. Scarcely is he born before the priest baptizing him, brings him a new birth to a more noble and precious life, a supernatural life, and makes him a son of God and of the Church of Jesus Christ. To strengthen him to fight bravely in spiritual combats, a priest invested with special dignity makes him a soldier of Christ by holy Chrism. Then, as soon as he is able to recognize and value the Bread of Angels, the priest gives It to him, the living and life-giving Food come down from Heaven. If he fall, the priest raises him up again in the name of God, and reconciles him to God with the Sacrament of Penance. Again, if he is called by God to found a family and to collaborate with Him in the transmission of human life throughout the world, thus increasing the number of the faithful on earth and, thereafter, the ranks of the elect in Heaven, the priest is there to bless his espousals and unblemished love; and when, finally, arrived at the portals of eternity, the Christian feels the need of strength and courage before presenting himself at the tribunal of the Divine Judge, the priest with the holy Oils anoints the failing members of the sick or dying Christian, and reconsecrates and comforts him. Thus the priest accompanies the Christian throughout the

pilgrimage of this life to the gates of Heaven. He accompanies the body to its resting place in the grave with rites and prayers of immortal hope. And even beyond the threshold of eternity he follows the soul to aid it with Christian suffrages, if need there be of further purification and alleviation. Thus, from the cradle to the grave the priest is ever beside the faithful, a guide, a solace, a minister of salvation and dispenser of grace and blessing.

POWER TO PARDON

But among all these powers of the priest over the mystical body of Christ for the benefit of the faithful, there is one of which the simple mention made above will not content Us. This is that power which, as St. John Chrysostom says: "God gave neither to Angels nor Archangels" [29]—the power to remit sins. "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain they are retained;" [30] a tremendous power, so peculiar to God that even human pride could not make the mind conceive that it could be given to man. "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" [31] And, when we see it exercised by a mere man there is reason to ask ourselves, not, indeed, with pharisaical scandal, but with reverent surprise at such a dignity: "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" [32] But it is so: the God-Man Who possessed the "power on earth to forgive sins" [33] willed to hand it on to His priests; to relieve, in His divine generosity and

[29] ST. CHRYSOST., *De sacerdotio,* lib. III, 5 (MIGNE, ibid.).
[30] JOHN, XX, 23.
[31] MARK, II, 7.
[32] LUKE, VII, 49.
[33] LUKE, V, 24.

mercy, the need of moral purification which is rooted in the human heart. What a comfort to the guilty, when, stung with remorse and repenting of his sins, he hears the word of the priest who says to him in God's name: "I absolve thee from thy sins!" These words fall, it is true, from the lips of one who, in his turn, must needs beg the same absolution from another priest. This does not debase the merciful gift; but makes it, rather, appear greater; since beyond the weak creature is seen more clearly the hand of God through whose power is wrought this wonder. As an illustrious layman has written, treating with rare competence of spiritual things: " . . . when a priest, groaning in spirit at his own unworthiness and at the loftiness of his office, places his consecrated hands upon our heads; when, humiliated at finding himself the dispenser of the Blood of the Covenant; each time amazed as he pronounces the words that give life; when a sinner has absolved a sinner; we, who rise from our knees before him, feel we have done nothing debasing. . . . We have been at the feet of a man who represented Jesus Christ . . . , we have been there to receive the dignity of free men and of sons of God." [34]

POWERS STABLE AND PERPETUAL

These august powers are conferred upon the priest in a special Sacrament designed to this end: they are not merely passing or temporary in the priest, but are stable and perpetual, united as they are with the indelible character imprinted on his

[34] A. MANZONI, *Osservazioni sulla morale cattolica*, cap. XVIII.

soul whereby he becomes "a priest forever;" [35] whereby he becomes like unto Him in Whose eternal priesthood he has been made a sharer. Even the most lamentable downfall, which, through human frailty, is possible to a priest, can never blot out from his soul the priestly character. But together with this character and these powers, the priest through the Sacrament of Orders receives new and special grace with special helps. Thereby, if only he will loyally further, by his free and personal cooperation, the divinely powerful action of the grace itself, he will be able worthily to fulfil all the duties, however arduous, of his lofty calling. He will not be overborne, but will be able to bear the tremendous responsibilities inherent to his priestly duty; responsibilities which have made fearful even the stoutest champions of the Christian priesthood, men like St. John Chrysostom, St. Ambrose, St. Gregory the Great, St. Charles and many others.

APOSTLE OF TRUTH AND CHARITY

The Catholic priest is minister of Christ and dispenser of the mysteries of God [36] in another way, that is, by his words. The "ministry of the word" [37] is a right which is inalienable; it is a duty which cannot be disallowed; for it is imposed by Jesus Christ Himself: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." [38] The Church of

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[35] Cf. *Ps. CIX*, 4.

[36] Cf. *I Cor.*, IV, 1.

[37] Cf. *Act.*, VI, 4.

[38] MATTH., XXVIII, 19-20.

Christ, depository and infallible guardian of divine revelation, by means of her priests, pours out the treasures of heavenly truth; she preaches Him Who is "the true Light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world;" [39] she sows with divine bounty that seed which is small and worthless to the profane eyes of the world, but which is like the mustard seed of the Gospel. For it has within itself power to strike strong deep roots in souls which are sincere and thirsting for the truth, and make them like sturdy trees able to withstand the wildest storms. [40]

THE CHURCH A BEACON OF TRUTH

Amidst all the aberrations of human thought, infatuated by a false emancipation from every law and curb; and amidst the awful corruptions of human malice, the Church rises up like a bright lighthouse, warning by the clearness of its beam every deviation to right or left from the way of truth, and pointing out to one and all the right course that they should follow. Woe if ever this beacon should be—We do not say extinguished, for that is impossible owing to the unfailing promises on which it is founded—but if it should be hindered from shedding far and wide its beneficent light! We see already with Our own eyes whither the world has been brought by its arrogant rejection of divine revelation, and its pursuit of false philosophical and moral theories that bear the specious name of "science." That it has not fallen still lower down the slope of error and vice is due to the guid-

[39] JOHN, I, 9.

[40] Cf. MATTH., XIII, 31, 32.

ance of the light of Christian truth that always shines in the world. Now the Church exercises her "ministry of the word" through her priests of every grade of the hierarchy, in which each has his wisely allotted place. These she sends everywhere as unwearied heralds of the good tidings which alone can save and advance true civilization and culture, or help them to rise again. The word of the priest enters the soul and brings light and power; the voice of the priest rises calmly above the storms of passion, fearlessly to proclaim the truth, and exhort to the good: that truth which elucidates and solves the gravest problems of human life; that good which no misfortune can take from us, which death but secures and renders immortal.

USEFULNESS OF PRIEST'S MINISTRY

Consider the truths themselves which the priest, if faithful to his ministry, must frequently inculcate. Ponder them one by one and dwell upon their inner power; for they make plain the influence of the priest, and how strong and beneficent it can be for the moral education, social concord and peaceful development of peoples. He brings home to young and old the fleeting nature of the present life; the perishableness of earthly goods; the value of spiritual goods and of the immortal soul; the severity of divine judgment; the spotless holiness of the divine gaze that reads the hearts of all; the justice of God, which "will render to every man according to his work." [41] These and similar lessons the priest teaches; a teaching fitted indeed to

[41] MATTH., XVI, 27.

moderate the feverish search for pleasure, and the uncontrolled greed for worldly goods, that debase so much of modern life, and spur on the different classes of society to fight one another like enemies, instead of helping one another like friends. In this clash of selfish interest, and unleashed hate, and dark plans of revenge, nothing could be better or more powerful to heal, than loudly to proclaim the "new commandment" of Christ. [42] That commandment enjoins a love which extends to all, knows no barriers nor national boundaries, excludes no race, excepts not even its own enemies.

CIVILIZATION'S DEBT TO CATHOLIC PRIESTHOOD

The experience of twenty centuries fully and gloriously reveals the power for good of the word of the priest. Being the faithful echo and reecho of the "word of God," which "is living and effectual and more piercing than any two-edged sword," it too reaches "unto the division of the soul and spirit;" [43] it awakens heroism of every kind, in every class and place, and inspires the self-forgetting deeds of the most generous hearts. All the good that Christian civilization has brought into the world is due, at least radically, to the word and works of the Catholic priesthood. Such a past might, of itself, serve as sufficient guarantee for the future; but we have a still more secure guarantee, "a more firm prophetical word" [44] in the infallible promises of Christ.

The work, too, of the Missions manifests most

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[42] Cf. JOHN, XIII, 34.

[43] Cf. *Hebr.*, IV, 12.

[44] Cf. *II Petr.*, I, 19.

vividly the power of expansion given by divine grace to the Church. This work is advanced and carried on principally by priests. Pioneers of faith and love, at the cost of innumerable sacrifices, they extend and widen the Kingdom of God upon Earth.

MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

Finally, the priest, in another way, follows the example of Christ. Of Him it is written that He "passed the whole night in the prayer of God" [45] and "ever lives to make intercession for us;" [46] and like Him, the priest, is public and official intercessor of humanity before God; he has the duty and commission of offering to God in the name of the Church, over and above sacrifice strictly so called, the "sacrifice of praise," in public and official prayer; [47] for several times each day, with psalms, prayers and hymns taken in great part from the inspired books, he pays to God this dutiful tribute of adoration and thus performs his necessary office of interceding for humanity. And never did humanity, in its afflictions, stand more in need of intercession and of the divine help which it brings. Who can tell how many chastisements priestly prayer wards off from sinful mankind, how many blessings it brings down and secures? If our Lord made such magnificent and solemn promises even to private prayers,[48] how much more powerful must be that prayer which is said *ex officio* in the

[45] Cf. LUKE, VI, 12.

[46] Cf. *Hebr.*, VII, 25.

[47] Cf. *Ps. XLIX*, 14.

[48] Cf. MATTH., VII, 7-11; MARK, XI, 24; LUKE, XI, 9-13.

name of the Church, the beloved Spouse of the Saviour? The Christian, though in prosperity so often forgetful of God, yet in the depth of his heart keeps his confidence in prayer, feels that prayer is all powerful, and as by a holy instinct, in every distress, in every peril whether private or public, has recourse with special trust to the prayers of the priest. To it the unfortunate of every sort look for comfort; to it they have recourse, seeking divine aid in all the vicissitudes of this exile here on earth. Truly does the "priest occupy a place mid-way between God and human nature: from Him bringing to us absolving beneficence, offering our prayers to Him and appeasing the wrathful Lord."[49]

TRIBUTE OF CHURCH'S ENEMIES

A last tribute to the priesthood is given by the enemies of the Church. For as We have said on a previous page, they show that they fully appreciate the dignity and importance of the Catholic priesthood, by directing against it their first and fiercest blows; since they know well how close is the tie that binds the Church to her priests. The most rabid enemies of the Catholic priesthood are today the very enemies of God; a homage indeed to the priesthood, showing it the more worthy of honour and veneration.

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[49] ST. JOHN CHRYS., *Homil. V in Isaiam* (MIGNE, *P. G.*, 56, 131).

II.

VIRTUE AND LEARNING IN THE PRIESTHOOD

MOST sublime, then, Venerable Brethren, is the dignity of the priesthood. Even the falling away of the few unworthy in the priesthood, however deplorable and distressing it may be, cannot dim the splendour of so lofty a dignity. Much less can the unworthiness of a few cause the worth and merit of so many to be overlooked; and how many have been, and are, in the priesthood, preeminent in holiness, in learning, in works of zeal, nay, even in martyrdom.

Nor must it be forgotten that personal unworthiness does not hinder the efficacy of a priest's ministry. For the unworthiness of the minister does not make void the Sacraments he administers; since the Sacraments derive their efficacy from the Blood of Christ, independently of the sanctity of the instrument, or, as scholastic language expresses it, the Sacraments work their effect *ex opere operato*.

Nevertheless, it is quite true that so holy an office demands holiness in him who holds it. A priest should have a loftiness of spirit, a purity of heart and a sanctity of life befitting the solemnity and holiness of the office he holds. For this, as We have said, makes the priest a mediator between God and man; a mediator in the place, and by the command of Him Who is "the one mediator of God and men, the man Jesus Christ." [50] The priest must, therefore, approach as close as possible to the perfection

[50] Cf. *I Tim.*, II, 5.

of Him Whose vicar he is, and render himself ever more and more pleasing to God, by the sanctity of his life and of his deeds; because more than the scent of incense, or the beauty of churches and altars, God loves and accepts holiness. "They who are the intermediaries between God and His people," says St. Thomas, "must bear a good conscience before God, and a good name among men." [51] On the contrary, whosoever handles and administers holy things, while blameworthy in his life, profanes them and is guilty of sacrilege: "They who are not holy ought not to handle holy things." [52]

COMMAND IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

For this reason even in the Old Testament God commanded his priests and levites: "Let them therefore be holy because I also am Holy: the Lord Who sanctify them." [53] In his canticle for the dedication of the temple, Solomon the Wise made this same request to the Lord in favour of the sons of Aaron: "Let Thy priests be clothed with justice: and let Thy saints rejoice." [54] So, Venerable Brethren, may we not ask with Saint Robert Bellarmine: "If so great uprightness, holiness and lively devotion was required of priests who offered sheep and oxen, and praised God for temporal blessings; what, I ask, is required of those priests who sacrifice the Divine Lamb and give thanks for eternal blessings?" [55] "A great dignity," exclaimed St.

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[51] ST. THOM. AQUIN., *Summ. Theol., Supplem.*, q. 36, a. 1, ad 2[m].

[52] *Decret.*, dist. 88, can. 6.

[53] *Levit.*, XXI, 8.

[54] *Ps. CXXXI*, 9.

[55] ST. ROB. BELL., *Explan. in Psal.*, Ps. CXXXI, 9.

Laurence Justinian, "but great too is the responsibility; placed high in the eyes of men they must also be lifted up to the peak of virtue before the eye of Him Who seeth all; otherwise their elevation will be not to their merit but to their damnation."[56]

HIGHEST HOLINESS REQUIRED

And surely every reason We have urged in showing the dignity of the Catholic priesthood does but reinforce its obligation of singular holiness; for as the Angelic Doctor teaches: "To fulfil the duties of holy Orders, common goodness does not suffice; but excelling goodness is required; that they who receive Orders and are thereby higher in rank than the people, may also be higher in holiness." [57] The Eucharistic Sacrifice in which the Immaculate Victim Who taketh away the sins of the world is immolated, requires in a special way that the priest, by a holy and spotless life, should make himself as far as he can, less unworthy of God, to Whom he daily offers that adorable Victim, the very Word of God incarnate for love of us. *Agnoscite quod agitis, imitamini quod tractatis,* "realise what you are doing, and imitate what you handle," [58] says the Church through the Bishop to the Deacons as they are about to be consecrated priests. The priest is also the almoner of God's graces of which the Sacraments are the channels; how grave a reproach would it be, for one who dispenses these most pre-

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[56] ST. LAUR. JUSTIN., *De instit., prael.*, c. 11 (ed. Veneta, 1606, fol. 380).

[57] ST. THOM. AQUIN., *Summ. Theol., Supplem.*, q. 35, a. 1, ad 3m.

[58] *Pont. Rom.*, de Ordinat. Presbyt.

cious graces, were he himself without them, or were he even to esteem them lightly and guard them with little care. Moreover, the priest must teach the truths of faith; but the truths of religion are never so worthily and effectively taught as when taught by virtue; because, in the common saying: "Deeds speak louder than words." The priest must preach the law of the Gospel; but for that preaching to be effective, the most obvious and, by the Grace of God, the most persuasive argument, is to see the actual practice of the law in him who preaches it. St. Gregory the Great gives the reason: "The voice which penetrates the hearts of the hearers, is the voice commended by the speaker's own life; because what his word enjoins, his example helps to bring about." [59] This exactly is what Holy Scripture says of our Divine Saviour: He "began to do and to teach." [60] And the crowds hailed Him, not so much because "never did man speak like this man," [61] but rather because "He hath done all things well." [62] On the other hand, they who "say and do not," practising not what they preach, become like the Scribes and Pharisees. And our Lord's rebuke to the Scribes and Pharisees, though it saved their legitimate authority to preach the word of God, was yet administered publicly, in the presence of the listening crowd: "The Scribes and Pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses. All things therefore whatsoever they shall say to

[59] ST. GREG. THE GREAT, *Epist.*, lib. I, ep. 25; MIGNE, *P. L.*, 77, 470.

[60] *Acts*, I, 1.

[61] JOHN, VII, 46.

[62] MARK, VII, 37.

you observe and do: but according to their works do ye not." [63] A preacher who does not try to ratify by his life's example the truth he preaches, only pulls down with one hand what he builds up with the other. On the contrary, God greatly blesses the labours of those heralds of the Gospel who attend first to their own holiness; they see their apostolate flourishing and fruitful, and in the day of the harvest, "coming they shall come with joyfulness, carrying in their sheaves." [64]

PERSONAL SANCTIFICATION COMES FIRST

It would be a grave error fraught with many dangers should the priest, carried away by false zeal, neglect his own sanctification, and become over immersed in the external works, however holy, of the priestly ministry. Thereby, he would run a double risk. In the first place he endangers his own eternal salvation, as the great Apostle of the Gentiles feared for himself: "But I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection: lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a cast-away." [65] In the second place he might lose, if not divine grace, certainly that unction of the Holy Spirit which gives such a marvellous force and efficacy to the external apostolate.

Now to all Christians in general it has been said: "Be ye perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect;" [66] how much more then should the priest consider these words of the Divine Master as spoken to

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[63] MATTH., XXIII, 2-3.

[64] *Ps. CXXV, 6.*

[65] *I Cor.*, IX, 27.

[66] MATTH., V, 48.

himself, called as he is by a special vocation to follow Christ more closely. Hence the Church publicly urges on all her clerics this most grave duty, placing it in the Code of her laws: "Clerics must lead a life, both interior and exterior, more holy than the laity, and be an example to them by excelling in virtue and good works," [67] and since the priest is an ambassador for Christ,[68] he should so live as to be able with truth to make his own the words of the Apostle: "Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ;" [69] he ought to live as another Christ, Who by the splendour of His virtue enlightened and still enlightens the world.

IMPORTANCE OF PIETY

It is plain, then, that all Christian virtues should flourish in the soul of the priest. Yet there are some virtues which in a very particular manner attach themselves to the priest as most befitting and necessary to him. Of these the first is piety, or godliness, according to the exhortation of the Apostle to his beloved Timothy: *Exerce . . . teipsum ad pietatem,* "exercise thyself unto godliness." [70] Indeed the priest's relations with God are so intimate, so delicate and so frequent, that clearly they should ever be graced by the sweet odour of piety; if "Godliness is profitable to all things," [71] it is especially profitable to a right exercise of the priestly charge. Without piety the holiest practices, the most solemn rites of the sacred ministry, will be

[67] *Cod. Iur. Can.,* c. 124.
[68] Cf. *II Cor.,* V, 20.
[69] *I Cor.,* IV, 16; XI, 1.
[70] *I Tim.,* IV, 7.
[71] *I Tim.,* IV, 8.

performed mechanically and out of habit; they will be devoid of spirit, unction and life. But remark, Venerable Brethren, the piety of which We speak is not that shallow and superficial piety which attracts but does not nourish, is busy but does not sanctify. We mean that solid piety which is not dependent upon changing mood or feeling. It is based upon principles of sound doctrine; it is ruled by staunch convictions; and so it resists the assaults and the illusions of temptation. This piety should primarily be directed towards God our Father in Heaven; yet it should be extended also to the Mother of God. The priest even more than the faithful should have devotion to our Lady, for the relation of the priest to Christ is more deeply and truly like that which Mary bears to her divine Son.

CHASTITY A MOST PRECIOUS VIRTUE

It is impossible to treat of the piety of a Catholic priest without being drawn on to speak too of another most precious treasure of the Catholic priesthood, that is, of chastity; for from piety springs the meaning and the beauty of chastity. Clerics of the Latin Church in higher Orders are bound by a grave obligation of chastity; so grave is the obligation in them of its perfect and total observance that a transgression involves the added guilt of sacrilege.[72]

Though this law does not bind, in all its amplitude, clerics of the Oriental Churches, yet among them also, ecclesiastical celibacy is revered; indeed in some cases, especially in the higher orders of

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[72] *Cod. Iur. Can.*, can. 132, § 1.

the Hierarchy, it is a necessary and obligatory requisite.

A certain connection between this virtue and the sacerdotal ministry can be seen even by the light of reason alone: since "God is a Spirit," [73] it is only fitting that he who dedicates and consecrates himself to God's service should in some way "divest himself of the body." The ancient Romans perceived this fitness; one of their laws which ran *Ad divos adeunte caste,* "approach the gods chastely," is quoted by one of their greatest orators with the following comment: "The law orders us to present ourselves to the gods in chastity—of spirit, that is, in which are all things. Nor does this exclude chastity of the body, which is to be understood, since the spirit is so far superior to the body; for it should be remembered that bodily chastity cannot be preserved, unless spiritual chastity be maintained." [74] In the Old Law, Moses in the name of God commanded Aaron and his sons to remain within the Tabernacle, and so to keep continent, during the seven days in which they were exercising their sacred functions.[75]

LAW OF ECCLESIASTICAL CELIBACY

But the Christian priesthood, being much superior to that of the Old Law, demanded a still greater purity. The law of ecclesiastical celibacy, whose first written traces presuppose a still earlier unwritten practice, dates back to a canon of the Council of Elvira,[76] at the beginning of the fourth

[73] JOHN, IV, 24.
[74] M. T. CICERO, De legibus, lib. II, c. 8.
[75] Cf. *Levit.*, VIII, 33-35.
[76] Conc. Eliberit, can. 33 (MANSI, tom. II, col. 11).

century, when persecution still raged. This law only makes obligatory what might in any case almost be termed a moral exigency that springs from the Gospel and the Apostolic preaching. For the Divine Master showed such high esteem for chasity, and exalted it as something beyond the common power; He Himself was the Son of a Virgin Mother, *Florem Matris Virginis,*[77] and was brought up in the virgin family of Joseph and Mary; He showed special love for pure souls such as the two Johns—the Baptist and the Evangelist. The great Apostle Paul, faithful interpreter of the New Law and of the mind of Christ, preached the inestimable value of virginity, in view of a more fervent service of God, and gave the reason when he said: "He that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God." [78] All this had almost inevitable consequences: the priests of the New Law felt the heavenly attraction of this chosen virtue; they sought to be of the number of those "to whom it is given to take this word," [79] and they spontaneously bound themselves to its observance. Soon it came about that the practice, in the Latin Church, received the sanction of ecclesiastical law. The second Council of Carthage at the end of the fourth century declared: "What the Apostles taught, and the early Church preserved, let us too, observe." [80]

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[77] Cf. *Brev. Rom.*, Hymn. ad Laud. in fest SS. Nom. Jesu.

[78] *I Cor.*, VII, 32.

[79] Cf. MATTH., XIX, 11.

[80] Conc. Carthag. II, can. 3; cfr. MANSI, *Coll. Conc.*, t. III, col. 91.

In the Oriental Church, too, most illustrious Fathers bear witness to the excellence of Catholic celibacy. In this matter as in others there was harmony between the Latin and Oriental Churches where accurate discipline flourished. St. Epiphanius at the end of the fourth century tells us that celibacy applied even to the sub-diaconate: "The Church does not on any account admit a man living in the wedded state and having children, even though he have only one wife, to the orders of deacon, priest, bishop or sub-deacon; but only him whose wife be dead or who should abstain from the use of marriage; this is done in those places especially where the ecclesiastical canons are accurately followed." [81] The Deacon of Edessa and Doctor of the Universal Church, well called the harp of the Holy Spirit, St. Ephraem, the Syrian, is particularly eloquent on this matter.[82] In one of his poems, addressed to his friend the Bishop Abraham, he says: "Thou art true to thy name, Abraham, for thou also art the father of many: but because thou hast no wife as Abraham had Sara, behold thy flock is thy spouse. Bring up its children in thy truth; may they become to thee children of the spirit and sons of the promise that makes them heirs to Eden. O sweet fruit of chastity, in which the priesthood finds its delights . . . the horn of plenty flowed over and anointed thee, a hand rested on thee and chose thee out, the Church desired thee and held thee dear." [83] And in

[81] ST. EPIPHAN, *Advers. Haer. Panar.*, 59, 4 (MIGNE, *P. G.*, 41, 1024).

[82] *Brev. Rom.*, 18 iun., lect. VI.

[83] ST. EPHRAEM, *Carmina Nisibaena*, carm. XIX (ed. Bickel, p. 112).

another place: "It is not enough for the priest and the name of the priesthood, it is not enough, I say, for him who offers up the living body, to cleanse his soul and tongue and hand and make spotless his whole body; but he must at all times be absolutely and preeminently pure, because he is established as a mediator between God and the human race. May He be praised Who made His servants clean!" [84] St. John Chrysostom affirms: "The priest must be so pure that, if he were to be lifted up and placed in the heavens themselves, he might take a place in the midst of the Angels." [85]

ANGELIC LIFE IDEAL OF PRIESTHOOD

In short the very height, or, to use Saint Epiphanius' phrase, "the incredible honour and dignity" [86] of the Christian priesthood, which We have briefly described, shows how becoming is clerical celibacy and the law which enjoins it. Priests have a duty which, in a certain way, is higher than that of the most pure spirits, "Who stand before the Lord." [87] Is it not right, then, that he live an all but angelic life? A priest is one who should be totally dedicated to the things of the Lord.[88] Is it not right, then, that he be entirely detached from the things of the world, and have his conversation in Heaven? [89] A priest's charge is

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[84] ST. EPHRAEM, *Carmina Nisibaena,* carm. XVIII (ibid.).

[85] ST. JOHN CHRYSOST., *De sacerdotio,* III, 4 (MIGNE, *P. G.,* 48, 642).

[86] ST. EPIPHAN., *Ad Haer. Panar.,* 59, 4 (MIGNE, *P. G.,* XLI, 1024).

[87] Cf. TOB., XII, 15.

[88] Cf. LUKE, II, 49; *I Cor.,* VII, 32.

[89] Cf. *Philipp.,* III, 20.

to be solicitous for the eternal salvation of souls, continuing in their regard the work of the Redeemer. Is it not, then, fitting that he keep himself free from the cares of a family, which would absorb a great part of his energies?

IMPRESSIVENESS OF ORDINATION CEREMONY

And truly an ordination ceremony, frequent though it be in the Catholic Church, never fails to touch the hearts of those present: how admirable a sight, these young ordinands who before receiving the Sub-diaconate, before, that is, consecrating themselves utterly to the service and the worship of God, freely renounce the joys and the pleasures which might rightfully be theirs in another walk of life! We say "freely," for though, after ordination, they are no longer free to contract earthly marriage, nevertheless they advance to ordination itself unconstrained by any law or person, and of their own spontaneous choice.[90]

Notwithstanding all this, We do not wish that what We have said in commendation of clerical celibacy should be interpreted as though it were Our mind in any way to blame, or, as it were, disapprove the different discipline legitimately prevailing in the Oriental Church. What We have said has been meant solely to exalt in the Lord something We consider one of the purest glories of the Catholic priesthood; something which seems to Us to correspond better to the desires of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to His purposes in regard to priestly souls.

Not less than by his chastity, the Catholic priest

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[90] *Cod. Iur. Can.*, can. 971.

ought to be distinguished by his detachment. Surrounded by the corruptions of a world in which everything can be bought and sold, he must pass through them utterly free of selfishness. He must holily spurn all vile greed of earthly gains, since he is in search of souls, not of money, of the glory of God, not his own. He is no mercenary working for a temporal recompense, nor yet an employee who, whilst attending conscientiously to duties of his office, at the same time is looking to his career and personal promotion; he is the "good soldier of Christ" who "entangleth not himself with secular business: that he may please him to whom he hath engaged himself." [91] The minister of God is a father of souls; and he knows that his toils and his cares cannot adequately be repaid with wealth and honours of earth. He is not indeed forbidden to receive fitting sustenance, according to the teaching of the Apostle: "They that serve the altar may partake with the altar . . . so also the Lord ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel." [92] But once "called to the inheritance of the Lord," as his very title "cleric" declares, a priest must expect no other recompense than that promised by Christ to His Apostles: "Your reward is very great in Heaven." [93] Woe to the priest who, forgetful of these divine promises should become "greedy of filthy lucre." [94] Woe if he join the number of the worldly over whom the Church like

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[91] *II Tim.*, II, 3-4.

[92] *I Cor.*, IX, 13-14.

[93] MATTH., V, 12.

[94] *Tit.*, I, 7.

the Apostle grieves: "All seek the things that are their own: not the things that are Jesus Christ's." [95] Such a priest, besides failing in his vocation, would earn the contempt even of his own people. They would perceive in him the deplorable contradiction between his conduct and the doctrine, so clearly expounded by Christ, which the priest is bound to teach: "Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth: where the rust and moth consume and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up to yourselves treasures in Heaven." [96] Judas, an Apostle of Christ, "one of the twelve," as the Evangelists sadly observe, was led down to the abyss of iniquity precisely through the spirit of greed for earthly things. Remembering him, it is easy to grasp how this same spirit could have brought such harm upon the Church throughout the centuries: greed, called by the Holy Spirit the "root of all evil," [97] can incite to any crime; and a priest who is poisoned by this vice, even though he stop short of crime, will nevertheless, consciously or unconsciously, make common cause with the enemies of God and of the Church, and co-operate in their evil designs.

COMPASSION TOWARD THE UNFORTUNATE

On the other hand, by sincere disinterestedness the priest can hope to win the hearts of all. For detachment from earthly goods, if inspired by lively faith, is always accompanied by tender compassion towards the unfortunate of every kind. Thus the priest becomes a veritable father of the

[95] *Philipp.*, II, 21.

[96] MATTH., VI, 19, 20.

[97] *I Tim.*, VI, 10.

poor. Mindful of the touching words of his Saviour, "As long as you did to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me," [98] he sees in them, and, with particular affection, venerates and loves Jesus Christ Himself.

Thus the Catholic priest is freed from the bonds of a family and of self-interest,—the two chief bonds which could bind him too closely to earth. Thus freed, his heart will more readily take flame from that heavenly fire that burns in the Heart of Jesus; that fire that seeks only to enflame apostolic hearts and through them "cast fire on all the earth." [99] This is the fire of zeal. Like the zeal of Jesus described in Holy Scripture,[100] the zeal of the priest for the glory of God and the salvation of souls ought to consume him. It should make him forget himself and all earthly things. It should powerfully urge him to dedicate himself utterly to his sublime work, and to search out means ever more effective for an apostolate ever wider and ever better.

THE CALL TO MISSION FIELDS

The Good Shepherd said: "And other sheep I have that are not of this fold; them also I must bring;"[101] and again, "See the countries for they are white already to the harvest."[102] How can a priest meditate upon these words and not feel his heart enkindled with yearning to lead souls to the Heart of the Good Shepherd? How can he fail to

[98] MATTH., 25, 40.
[99] Cf. LUKE, 12, 49.
[100] *Ps. LXVIII*, 10; JOHN, II, 17.
[101] JOHN, X, 16.
[102] JOHN, IV, 35.

offer himself to the Lord of the harvest for unremitting toil? Our Lord saw the multitudes "lying like sheep that have no shepherd." [103] Such multitudes are to be seen today not only in the far distant lands of the Missions, but also, alas! in countries which have been Christian for centuries. How can a priest see such multitudes and not feel deeply within himself an echo of that divine pity which so often moved the Heart of the Son of God?[104]—a priest, we say, who is conscious of possessing the words of life and of having in his hands the God-given means of regeneration and salvation? But thanks be to God, it is just this flame of apostolic zeal which is one of the brightest jewels in the crown of the Catholic priesthood. Our heart fills with fatherly consolation at the sight of Our Brothers and Our beloved Sons, Bishops and Priests, who like chosen troops ever prompt to the call of their chief hasten to all outposts of this vast field. There they engage in the peaceful but bitter warfare of truth against error, of light against darkness, of the Kingdom of God against the kingdom of Satan.

OBEDIENCE OF THE PRIEST

But, by its very nature as an active and courageous company, the Catholic priesthood must have the spirit of discipline, or, to use a more deeply Christian word, obedience. It is obedience which binds together all ranks into the harmony of the Church's Hierarchy.

The Bishop, in his admonition to the ordinands,

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[103] MATTH., IX, 36.

[104] Cf. MATTH., IX, 36; XIV, 14; XV, 32; MARK, VI, 34; VIII, 2; etc.

says: "With a certain wonderful variety Holy Church is clothed, made comely and is ruled; since in her some are consecrated Pontiffs, and other priests of lesser degree, and from many members of differing dignity there is formed one body of Christ." [105] This obedience priests promised to the Bishop after Ordination, the holy oil still fresh on their hands. On the day of his consecration the Bishop, in his turn, swore obedience to the supreme visible Head of the Church, the successor of St. Peter, the Vicar of Jesus Christ. Let then obedience bind ever closer together these various members of the Hierarchy, one with another, and all with the Head; and thus make the Church Militant a foe truly terrible to the enemies of God, *ut castrorum aciem ordinatam,* "as an army set in array." [106] Let obedience temper excessive zeal on the one hand, and put the spur to weakness and slackness on the other. Let it assign to each his place and station. These each should accept without resistance; for otherwise the magnificent work of the Church in the world would be sadly hindered. Let each one see in the arrangements of his hierarchical Superiors the arrangements of the only true Head, Whom all obey: Jesus Christ our Lord, Who became for us "obedient unto death," even to the death of the cross. . . ." [107] The divine High Priest wished us to have abundant witness to His own most perfect obedience to the Eternal Father; for this reason both the Prophecies and the Gospels often testify to the entire submission of the Son

[105] *Pont. Rom.*, de Ordinat. Presbyt.

[106] Cfr. *Cant.*, VI, 3, 9.

[107] *Philipp.*, II, 8.

of God to the will of the Father. "When he cometh into the world he saith; sacrifice and oblation thou wouldst not: but a body thou hast fitted to me. . . . Then said I: Behold I come. In the head of the book it is written of me that I should do thy will, O God . . . " [108] "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." [109] On His very cross He consecrated obedience. He did not wish to commit His soul into the hands of His Father before having declared that all was fulfilled in Him that the Sacred Scriptures had foretold; He had accomplished the entire charge entrusted to Him by the Father, even to the last deeply mysterious "I thirst," which He pronounced "that the Scripture might be fulfilled." [110] By these words He wished to show that zeal even the most ardent ought always to be completely subjected to the will of the Father; that our zeal should always be controlled by obedience to those who, for us, have the place of the Father, and convey to us His will, in other words our lawful Superiors in the Hierarchy.

LEARNING IN THE PRIESTHOOD

But the portrait of the Catholic priest which We intend to exhibit to the world would be unfinished were We to omit another most important feature, —learning. This the Church requires of him; for the Catholic priest is set up as a "Master in Israel;" [111] he has received from Jesus Christ the office and commission of teaching truth: "Teach

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[108] *Hebr.*, X, 5-7.

[109] JOHN, IV, 34.

[110] JOHN, XIX, 28.

[111] Cf. JOHN, III, 10.

. . . all nations." [112] He must teach the truth that heals and saves; and because of this teaching, like the Apostle of the Gentiles, he has a duty towards "the learned and the unlearned." [113] But how can he teach unless he himself possess knowledge? "The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth," saith the Holy Spirit in the Prophecy of Malachy.[114] Who could ever utter a word in praise of sacerdotal learning more weighty than that which divine Wisdom itself once spoke by the mouth of Osee: "Because thou has rejected knowledge, I will reject thee that thou shall not do the office of priesthood to Me." [115] The priest should have full grasp of the Catholic teaching on faith and morals; he should know how to present it to others; and he should be able to give the reasons for the dogmas, laws and observances of the Church of which he is minister. Profane sciences have indeed made much progress; but in religious questions there is much ignorance still darkening the mind of our contemporaries. This ignorance the priest must dispel. Never was more pointed than today the warning of Tertullian *Hoc unum gestit interdum (veritas), ne ignorata damnetur,* "This alone truth sometimes craves, that it be not condemned unheard." [116] It is the priest's task to clear away from men's minds the mass of prejudices and misunderstandings which hostile adversaries have piled up; the modern mind is eager

[112] MATTH., XXVIII, 15.

[113] *Rom.*, I, 14.

[114] MALACH., II, 7.

[115] OSEE, IV, 6.

[116] *Tert. Apolog.*, c. 1 (MIGNE, *P. L.*, 1, 260).

for the truth, and the priest should be able to point it out with serene frankness; there are souls still hesitating, distressed by doubts, and the priest should inspire courage and trust, and guide them with calm security to the safe port of faith, faith accepted by both head and heart; error makes its onslaughts, arrogant and persistent, and the priest should know how to meet them with a defence vigorous and active, yet solid and unruffled.

SEMINARY TRAINING ONLY BEGINNING

Therefore, Venerable Brethren, it is necessary that the priest, even among the absorbing tasks of his charge, and ever with a view to it, should continue his theological studies with unremitting zeal. The knowledge acquired at the seminary is indeed a sufficient foundation with which to begin; but it must be grasped more thoroughly, and perfected by an ever-increasing knowledge and understanding of the sacred sciences. Herein is the source of effective preaching and of influence over the souls of others.[117] Yet even more is required. The dignity of the office he holds, and the maintenance of a becoming respect and esteem among the people, which helps so much in his pastoral work, demand more than purely ecclesiastical learning. The priest must be graced by no less knowledge and culture than is usual among well-bred and well-educated people of his day. This is to say that he must be healthily modern, as is the Church, which is at home in all times and all places, and adapts itself to all; which blesses and furthers all healthy

[117] Cf. *Cod. Iur. Can.*, can. 129.

initiative and has no fear of the progress, even the most daring progress, of science, if only it be true science. Indeed, in all ages the Catholic clergy has distinguished itself in every field of human knowledge; in fact, in certain centuries it so took the lead in the field of learning that the word "cleric" became synonymous with "learned." The Church preserved and saved the treasures of ancient culture, which without her and her monasteries would have been almost entirely lost; and her most illustrious Doctors show that all human knowledge can help to throw light upon and to defend the Catholic faith. An illustrious example of this We Ourselves have recently called to the world's attention. For We crowned with the halo of sanctity and the glorious title of Doctor of the Church that great teacher of the incomparable Aquinas: Albert of Cologne, whom his contemporaries had already honoured with the titles of Great and of Universal Doctor.

RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GIFTS

Today it could hardly be hoped that the clergy could hold a similar primacy in every branch of knowledge; the range of human science has become so vast that no man can comprehend it all, much less become distinguished in each of its numberless branches. Nevertheless wise encouragement and help should be given to those members of the clergy, who, by taste and special gifts, feel a call to devote themselves to study and research, in this or that branch of science, in this or that art; they do not thereby deny their clerical profession; for all this, undertaken within just limits and under the guid-

ance of the Church, redounds to the good estate of the Church and to the glory of her divine Head, Jesus Christ. And among the rest of the clergy, none should remain content with a standard of learning and culture which sufficed, perhaps, in other times; they must try to attain—or, rather, they must actually attain—a higher standard of general education and of learning. It must be broader and more complete; and it must correspond to the generally higher level and wider scope of modern education as compared with the past.

HOLINESS PREFERRED OVER SCIENCE

Sometimes, it is true, and even in modern times, our Lord makes the world, as it were, His plaything;[118] for He has been pleased to elect to the priestly state men almost devoid of that learning of which We have been speaking; and through them He has worked wonders. But He did this that all might learn, if there be a choice, to prize holiness more than learning; not to place more trust in human than in divine means. He did this because the world has need, from time to time, to hear repeated that wholesome practical lesson: "The foolish things of the world hath God chosen to confound the wise . . . that no flesh should glory in His sight." [119]

In the natural order, divine miracles suspend for a moment the effect of physical laws, but do not revoke them. So, too, the case of these Saints, real living miracles in whom high sanctity made up for all the rest, does not make the lesson We have been

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[118] *Prov.*, VIII, 31.
[119] *I Cor.*, I, 27-29.

teaching any the less true or any the less necessary.

It is clear, then, that virtue and learning are required, that there is need of example and of edification, need for the priest to spread on all sides, and to all who draw near him "the good odour of Christ." [120] This need is today more keenly felt and has become more evident and urgent. This is because of Catholic Action, that movement so consoling, which has within it the power to spur on to the very highest ideals of perfection. Through Catholic Action the relations of the laity with priests are becoming more frequent and more intimate. And in this collaboration, the laity quite naturally look upon the priest not merely as a guide, but as a model also of Christian life and of apostolic virtue.

III.

TRAINING FOR THE PRIESTHOOD

THE state of the priesthood is thus more sublime, and the gifts it calls for very lofty. Hence, Venerable Brethren, the inescapable necessity of giving candidates for the sanctuary a training correspondingly superior.

Conscious of this necessity, the Church down the ages has shown a more tender solicitude and motherly care for the training of her priests than for anything else. She is not unaware that, as the religious and moral conditions of peoples depend in great measure upon their priests, so, too,

[120] Cf. *II Cor.*, II, 15.

the future of the priest depends on the training he has received. The words of the Holy Spirit apply no less truly to him than to others: "A young man according to his way. Even when he is old, he will not depart from it." [121] Hence, the Church, moved by the Holy Spirit, has willed that everywhere seminaries should be erected, where candidates for the priesthood may be trained and educated with singular care. The seminary is and should be the apple of your eye, Venerable Brethren, who share with Us the heavy weight of the government of the Church; it is, and should be, the chief object of your solicitude. Careful above all should be the choice of superiors and professors; and, in a most special manner, of the spiritual father, who has so delicate and so important a part in the nurture of the priestly spirit. Give the best of your clergy to your seminaries; do not fear to take them from other positions. These positions may seem of greater moment, but in reality their importance is not to be compared with that of the seminaries, which is capital and indispensable. Seek also from elsewhere, wherever you can find them, men really fitted for this noble task. Let them be such as teach priestly virtues rather by example than by words, men who are capable of imparting, together with learning, a solid, manly and apostolic spirit. Make piety, purity, discipline and study flourish in the seminary. With prudent foresight, arm and fortify the immature minds of students both against the temptations of the present, and against the far more serious perils of the future. For they will be exposed to all the temptations of the world,

[121] *Prov.*, XXII, 6.

in the midst of which they must live, "that they save all." [122]

Now it is of great importance, as We have said, that priests should have a learning adequate to the requirements of the age. For the attainment of this, in addition to a solid classical education, there is required both instruction and training in scholastic philosophy "according to the method, and the mind and the principles of St. Thomas Aquinas" —*ad Angelici Doctoris rationem, doctrinam et principia.*[123] This Our illustrious Predecessor, Leo XIII, has called the *philosophia perennis.* It is essential to the future priest. It will help him to a thorough understanding of dogma. It will effectively forearm him against modern errors of whatever sort. It will sharpen his mind to distinguish truth from falsehood. It will form him to habits of intellectual clearness, so necessary in any studies or problems of the future. It will give him a great superiority over others, whose mere erudition, perhaps, is wider but who lack philosophical training.

COMMON SEMINARIES ADVOCATED

There are some regions, where the dioceses are small, or students unhappily few, or where there is a shortage of means and suitable men. Hence it is impossible for every diocese to have its own seminary, equipped according to all the regulations of Canon Law and other prescriptions of the Church. Where this happens, it is most proper that the bishops of the district should help one another in brotherly charity, should concentrate and unite

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[122] Cf. *Cor.*, IX, 22.

[123] *Cod. Iur. Can.*, c. 1366, § 2.

their forces in a common seminary, fully worthy of its high purpose. The great advantages of such concentration amply repay the sacrifices entailed in obtaining it. It is indeed a sacrifice, grievous to the fatherly heart of a bishop, to see his clerics, even for a time, taken away from their shepherd, who wishes himself to give his future co-workers his own apostolic spirit; and to see them taken away from the diocese which is to be the field of their ministry. But these sacrifices will all be repaid with interest when these clerics return as priests. They will be better formed, and more richly endowed with spiritual wealth, which they will spend with greater generosity and with greater profit to their diocese. Therefore, We have never let pass an opportunity to favour, and encourage and foster such efforts. Often, in fact, We have suggested and recommended them. On Our part, also, wherever We thought it necessary, We have Ourselves, as is well known, erected or improved or enlarged several such regional seminaries, not without heavy expense and trouble; and We will continue in the future, by the help of God, to apply Ourselves with all zeal to this work; for We hold it to be most conducive to the good of the Church.

SELECTION OF CANDIDATES

This achievement in the erection and management of Seminaries for the education of future priests deserves all praise. But it would be of little avail, were there any lack of care in the selecting and approving of candidates. In this selection and approval, all who are in charge of the clergy should have some part: superiors, spiritual directors and confessors, each in the manner and within the lim-

its proper to his office. They must indeed foster and strengthen vocations with sedulous care; but with no less zeal they must discourage unsuitable candidates, and in good time send them away from a path not meant for them. Such are all youths who show a lack of necessary fitness, and who are, therefore, unlikely to persevere in the priestly ministry both worthily and becomingly. In these matters hesitation and delay is a serious mistake and may do serious harm. It is far better to dismiss an unfit student in the early stages; but if, for any reason, such dismissal has been delayed, the mistake should be corrected as soon as it is known. There should be no human considerations or false mercy. Such false mercy would be a real cruelty, not only towards the Church, to whom would be given an unfitted or unworthy minister, but also towards the youth himself; for, thus embarked upon a false course, he would find himself exposed to the risk of becoming a stumbling block to himself and to others, with peril of eternal ruin.

RESPONSIBILITY OF SEMINARY HEADS

The Head of the Seminary lovingly follows the youths entrusted to his care and studies the inclinations of every one. His watchful and experienced eye will perceive, without difficulty, whether one or other have, or have not, a true priestly vocation. This, as you well know, Venerable Brethren, is not established so much by some inner feeling or devout attraction, which may sometimes be absent or hardly perceptible; but rather by a right intention in the aspirant, together with a combination of physical, intellectual and moral qualities which

make him fitted for such a state of life. He must look to the priesthood solely from the noble motive of consecrating himself to the service of God and the salvation of souls; he must likewise have, or at least strive earnestly to acquire, solid piety, perfect purity of life and sufficient knowledge such as We have explained on a previous page. Thus he shows that he is called by God to the priestly state. Whoever, on the other hand, urged on, perhaps, by ill-advised parents, looks to this state as a means to temporal and earthly gains which he imagines and desires in the priesthood, as happened more often in the past; whoever is intractable, unruly or undisciplined, has small taste for piety, is not industrious, and shows little zeal for souls; whoever has a special tendency to sensuality, and after long trial has not proved he can conquer it; whoever has no aptitude for study and who will be unable to follow the prescribed courses with due satisfaction; all such cases show that they are not intended for the priesthood. By letting them go on almost to the threshold of the sanctuary, superiors only make it ever more difficult for them to draw back; and, perhaps, even cause them to accept ordination through human respect, without vocation and without the priestly spirit. Let Superiors of seminaries, together with the spiritual directors and confessors, reflect how weighty a responsibility they assume before God, before the Church, and before the youths themselves, if they do not take all means at their disposal to avoid a false step. We declare, too, that confessors and spiritual directors could also be responsible for such a grave error; not indeed because they can take any outward action,

since that is severely forbidden them by their most delicate office itself, and often also by the inviolable sacramental seal; but because they can have a great influence on the souls of the individual students, and with paternal firmness they should guide every one according to his spiritual needs. Should the superiors, for whatever reason, not take steps or show themselves weak, then especially should confessors and spiritual directors admonish the unsuited and unworthy, without any regard to human considerations, of their obligation to retire while yet there is time; in this they should keep to the most secure opinion, which in this case is the one most in favour of the penitent, for it saves him from a step which could be for him eternally fatal. If sometimes they should not see so clearly that an obligation is to be imposed, let them at least, use all the authority which springs from their office and the paternal affection they have for their spiritual sons, and so induce those who have not the necessary fitness to retire of their own free will. Let confessors remember the words of St. Alphonsus Liguori on a similar matter: "In general . . . in such cases the more severity the confessor uses with his penitents, the more will he help them towards their salvation; and on the contrary, the more cruel will he be the more he is benign." St. Thomas of Villanova called such over-kind confessors: *Impie pios*—"wickedly kind;" such charity is contrary to charity.[124]

The chief responsibility, however, rests with the Bishop, who according to the severe law of the

[124] ST. ALPH. DE LIG., *Oper. ascet.*, vol. 3 (ed. Marietti, 1847, p. 122).

Church: "Should not confer holy orders on anyone, unless from positive signs he is morally certain of canonical fitness; otherwise he not only sins grievously, but also places himself in danger of sharing in the sins of others." [125] This canon is a clear echo of the warning of the Apostle to Timothy: "Impose not hands lightly on any man, neither be partaker of other men's sins." [126] "To impose hands lightly," Our Predecessor St. Leo the Great expounds, "is to confer the sacerdotal dignity on persons not sufficiently approved: before maturity in age, before the merit of obedience, before a time of testing, before trial of knowledge; and to be a partaker of other men's sins is for the ordainer to become as unworthy as the unworthy man whom he ordains;" [127] for as St. John Chrysostom says, "You who have conferred the dignity upon him must take the responsibility of both his past and his future sins." [128]

St. Charles Borromeo Quoted

These are severe words, Venerable Brethren, yet still more dreadful is the responsibility which they declare, a responsibility which justified the great Bishop of Milan, St. Charles Borromeo in saying: "In this matter, my slightest neglect can involve me in very great sin." [129] Listen to the warning

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[125] *Cod. Iur. Can., can.* 973 § 3.

[126] *1. Tim.*, V, 22.

[127] St. Leo the Great, *Ep. 12* (Migne, *P. L.*, 54, 647).

[128] St. John Chrys., *Hom. 16 in Tim.* (Migne, *P. G.*, 62, 587).

[129] St. Carol. Borromeo, *Hom. ad Ordinandos*, 1 iun. 1577 (*Homiliae*, ed. bibl. Ambros., Mediol., 1747, t. IV, p. 270).

of Chrysostom whom We have just quoted: "Impose not hands after the first trial, nor after the second, nor yet the third, but only after frequent and careful observation and searching examination." [130] This warning applies in an especial way to the question of the uprightness of life in candidates for the priesthood. "It is not enough," says the holy Bishop and Doctor St. Alphonsus de Liguori, "that the Bishop know nothing evil of the ordinand; he must have positive evidence of his uprightness." [131] Hence, do not fear to seem harsh if, in virtue of your rights and fulfilling your duty, you require such positive proofs of worthiness before ordination; or if you defer an ordination in case of doubt; because, as St. Gregory the Great eloquently teaches: "Cut from the forest beams fit for building; but do not place the weight of the building upon them at once. Delay many days, until they are dried and made fit for the purpose; because, if this precaution be omitted, very soon they will break under the weight;" [132] or, to use the short but clear expression of the Angelic Doctor: "Holiness must come before holy orders . . . hence the burden of orders should be placed only on walls seasoned with sanctity, freed of the damp of sins." [133]

In short, let all canonical prescriptions be care-

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[130] ST. JOHN CHRYSOST., *Hom. 16 in Tim.* (MIGNE, *P. G.*, 62, 587).

[131] S. ALF. M. DE' LIGUORI, *Theol. mor., de Sacram. Ordin.*, n. 803.

[132] S. GREG. THE GREAT, *Epist.*, lib. 9, ep. 106 (MIGNE, *P. L.*, 70, 1031).

[133] ST. THOM. AQUIN., *Summ. Theol.*, 2^a-2^{ae}, q. 189, a. 1, ad 3.

fully obeyed, and let everyone put into practice the wise rules on this subject, which We caused to be promulgated a few years ago by the Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments.[134] Thus will the Church be saved much grief, and the faithful much scandal.

We have also had similar regulations sent to Religious; [135] and while We urge upon all concerned their faithful observance, We now recall them to the attention of all heads of religious institutes, who have youths destined for the priesthood. They should consider as addressed also to them what We have recommended above concerning the formation of the clergy; since it is they who present their students for ordination, and the Bishop usually relies upon their judgment.

FALSE FEAR OF TOO FEW PRIESTS

Bishops and religious superiors should not be deterred from this needful severity by fear of diminishing the number of priests for the diocese or institute. The Angelic Doctor St. Thomas long ago proposed this difficulty, and answers it with his usual lucidity and wisdom: "God never abandons His Church; and so the number of priests will be always sufficient for the needs of the faithful, provided the worthy are advanced and the unworthy sent away." [136] The same Doctor and Saint, basing

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[134] Instructio super scrutinio candidatorum instituendo antequam ad ordines promoveantur, 27 Dec. 1930 (*A. A. S.*, vol. XXIII, p. 120).

[135] Instructio ad supremos religiosorum, etc. Moderatores de formatione clericali, etc., 1 Dec., 1931 (*A. A. S.*, vol. XXIV, pp. 74-81).

[136] ST. THOM. AQUIN., *Summ. Theol.; Supplem.*, q. 36, a. 4, ad 1.

himself upon the severe words quoted by the Fourth Oecumenical Council of the Lateran,[137] observes to Our purpose: "Should it ever become impossible to maintain the present number, it is better to have a few good priests than a multitude of bad ones."[138] It was in this sense that We Ourselves, on the solemn occasion of the international pilgrimage of seminarists during the year of Our priestly jubilee, addressing an imposing group of Italian archbishops and bishops, reaffirmed that one well trained priest is worth more than many trained badly or scarcely at all. For such would be not merely unreliable but a likely source of sorrow to the Church.[139] What a terrifying account, Venerable Brethren, We shall have to give to the Prince of Shepherds,[140] to the Supreme Bishop of souls,[141] if we have handed over these souls to incompetent guides and incapable leaders.

THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER

Yet although it remains unquestionably true that mere numbers should not be the chief concern of those engaged in the education of the clergy, yet at the same time, all should do their utmost to increase the ranks of strong and zealous workers in the vineyard of the Lord; the more so, as the moral needs of society are growing greater instead of less. Of all the means to this noble end, the easiest and the most effective is prayer. This is,

[137] Conc. Lat. IV, anno 1215, can. 22.
[138] ST. THOM. AQUIN., loc. cit.
[139] Cf. *Osservatore Romano*, 69, n. 21,022, an. 1929, n. 176, 29-30 July.
[140] Cf. *I Petr.*, V, 4.
[141] Cf. *I Petr.*, II, 25.

moreover, a means within the power of everyone. It should be assiduously used by all, as it was enjoined by Jesus Christ Himself: "The harvest, indeed, is great but the labourers are few. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He send forth labourers into His harvest." [142] What prayer could be more acceptable to the Sacred Heart of our Saviour? What prayer is more likely to be answered as promptly and bounteously as this, which meets so nearly the burning desire of that Divine Heart? "Ask therefore, and it will be given unto you;" [143] ask for good and holy priests and Our Lord will not refuse to send them to His Church, as ever He has done throughout the centuries. It has been, in fact, precisely in times which seemed least propitious, that the number of priestly vocations increased. This is clear from Catholic hagiography of the nineteenth century, a century rich in splendid names on the rolls both of secular and regular clergy. One has only to think of those three splendid saints whom We Ourselves had the consolation of canonizing—St. John Mary Vianney, St. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo and St. John Bosco, men of truly lofty holiness, every one in his special way.

PROMOTION OF PRIESTLY VOCATIONS

Now God Himself liberally sows in the generous hearts of many young men this precious seed of vocation; but human means of cultivating this seed must not be neglected. There are innumerable ways and countless holy means suggested by the

[142] MATTH., IX, 37-38.

[143] MATTH., VII, 7.

Holy Spirit; and all such salutary works which strive to preserve, promote and help priestly vocations, We praise and bless with all Our heart. "No matter how we seek," says the lovable Saint of charity, Vincent de Paul, "We shall always discover ourselves unable to contribute to anything more great than to the making of good priests." [144] In truth nothing is more acceptable to God, of more honour to the Church, and more profitable to souls than the precious gift of a holy priest. If he who offers even a cup of water to one of the least of the disciples of Christ "shall not lose his reward," [145] what reward will he receive who places, so to speak, into the pure hands of a young priest the sacred chalice, in which is contained the Blood of Redemption; who helps him to lift it up to heaven, a pledge of peace and of blessing for mankind?

CONTRIBUTION OF CATHOLIC ACTION

And here Our thoughts turn gladly to that Catholic Action, so much desired and promoted and defended by Us. For by Catholic Action the laity share in the hierarchical apostolate of the Church, and hence it cannot neglect this vital problem of priestly vocations. Comfort has filled Our heart to see the associates of Catholic Action everywhere distinguishing themselves in all fields of Christian activity, but especially in this. Certainly the richest reward of such activity is that really wonderful number of priestly and religious vocations which continue to flourish in their or-

[144] Cf. P. RENAUDIN, *St. Vincent de Paul*, ch. 5.

[145] MATTH., X, 42.

ganizations for the young. This shows that these organizations are both a fruitful ground of virtue, and also a well guarded and well cultivated nursery, where the most beautiful and delicate flowers may develop without danger. May all members of Catholic Action feel the honour which thus falls on their association. Let them be persuaded that, in no better way than by this work for an increase in the ranks of the secular and regular clergy, can the Catholic laity really participate in the high dignity of the "kingly priesthood" which the Prince of the Apostles attributes to the whole body of the redeemed.[146]

INFLUENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

But the first and most natural place where the flowers of the sanctuary should almost spontaneously grow and bloom, remains always the truly and deeply Christian family. Most of the saintly bishops and priests whose "praise the Church declares," [147] owe the beginning of their vocation and their holiness to the example and teaching of a father strong in faith and manly virtues, of a pure and devoted mother, and of a family in which the love of God and neighbour, joined with simplicity of life, has reigned supreme. To this ordinary rule of divine providence exceptions are rare and only serve to prove the rule. In an ideal home the parents, like Tobias and Sara, beg of God a numerous posterity "in which Thy name may be blessed for ever," [148] and receive it as a gift from heaven and a precious trust; they strive to instil into their

[146] Cf. *I Petr.*, II, 9.
[147] Cf. *Eccl.*, XLIV, 15.
[148] TOB., VIII, 9.

children from their early years a holy fear of God, and true Christian piety; they foster a tender devotion to Jesus, the Blessed Sacrament and the Immaculate Virgin; they teach respect and veneration for holy places and persons. In such a home the children see in their parents a model of an upright, industrious and pious life; they see their parents holily loving each other in our Lord, see them approach the Holy Sacraments frequently and not only obey the laws of the Church concerning abstinence and fasting, but also observe the spirit of voluntary Christian mortification; they see them pray at home, gathering around them all the family, that common prayer may rise more acceptably to heaven; they find them compassionate towards the distress of others and see them divide with the poor the much or the little they possess. In such a home it is scarcely possible that, while all seek to copy their parents' example, none of the sons should listen to and accept the invitation of the Divine Master: "Come ye after Me, and I will make you to be fishers of men." [149] Blessed are those Christian parents who are able to accept without fear the vocations of their sons, and see in them a signal honour for their family and a mark of the special love and providence of our Lord. Still more blessed, if, as was oftener the case in ages of greater faith, they make such divine visitations the object of their earnest prayer.

Yet it must be confessed with sadness that only too often parents seem to be unable to resign themselves to the priestly or religious vocations of their children. Such parents have no scruple in oppos-

[149] MATTH., IV, 19.

ing the divine call with objections of all kinds; they even have recourse to means which can imperil not only the vocation to a more perfect state, but also the very conscience and the eternal salvation of those souls they ought to hold so dear. This happens all too often in the case even of parents who glory in being sincerely Christian and Catholic, especially in the higher and more cultured classes. This is a deplorable abuse, like that unfortunately prevalent in centuries past, of forcing children into the ecclesiastical career without the fitness of a vocation.[150] It hardly does honour to those higher classes of society, which are on the whole so scantly represented in the ranks of the clergy. The lack of vocations in families of the middle and upper classes may be partly explained by the dissipations of modern life, the seductions, which especially in the larger cities, prematurely awaken the passions of youth; the schools in many places which scarcely conduce to the development of vocations. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that such a scarcity reveals a deplorable falling off of faith in the families themselves. Did they indeed look at things in the light of faith, what greater dignity could Christian parents desire for their sons, what ministry more noble, than that which, as We have said, is worthy of the veneration of men and angels? A long and sad experience has shown that a vocation betrayed—the word is not to be thought too strong—is a source of tears not only for the sons but also for the ill-advised parents; and God grant that such tears be not so long delayed as to become eternal tears.

[150] *Cod. Iur. Can.*, can. 971.

IV.

HOLY FATHER'S CONCLUDING ADVICE

AND now, finally, to you dear Children, Priests of the Most High, both secular and regular, the world over, We address Our words. You are "Our glory and joy," [151] you, who with such generosity bear the "burden of the day and the heats," [152] you, who so powerfully help Us and Our Brethren of the Episcopate in fulfilling the duty of feeding the flock of Christ. To you We send Our Paternal thanks and Our warmest encouragement. We know and fully appreciate your admirable zeal; and to it, in the needs of the present, We make this heartfelt appeal. These needs are becoming daily graver. All the more must your redeeming work grow and intensify; for "you are the salt of the earth, and the light of the world." [153]

If, however, your work is to be blessed by God and produce abundant fruit, it must be rooted in holiness of life. Sanctity as We said above, is the chief and most important endowment of the Catholic priest. Without it other gifts will not go far; with it, even supposing other gifts be meagre, the priest can work marvels. We have the example of St. Joseph of Cupertino, and in times nearer to our own, of that humble Curé d'Ars, St. John Mary Vianney, of whom We have already spoken; whom We have willed to set up before all parish

[151] *I Thess.*, II, 20.

[152] MATTH., XX, 12.

[153] MATTH., V, 13-14.

priests as their model and heavenly Patron. Therefore with the Apostle of the Gentiles, We say to you: "Behold your vocation;" [154] and beholding it, you cannot fail to value ever more highly the grace given to you in ordination and to strive to "walk worthily of the vocation in which you are called." [155]

EXHORTATION OF POPE PIUS X

In this striving you will be most wonderfully helped by a practice commended by Our Predecessor of holy memory Pius X. This commendation is contained in that "Exhortation to the Catholic Clergy," which he wrote with such unction and affection.[156] This We warmly recommend you to read. In it, among all the means to preserve and increase the grace of the priesthood, he placed first the use of the Spiritual Exercises.[157] This means We Ourselves have also frequently recommended; and particularly in Our Encyclical Letter *Mens Nostra,*[158] We have paternally and solemnly urged it upon all Our sons, but more especially upon Our priests. As the year of Our priestly Jubilee drew to a close, We could find no better and more salutary reminder of that happy anniversary, than to give to Our sons an invitation, through the above mentioned letter, to draw more copiously from the waters of life springing up

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[154] Cf. *I Cor.*, I, 26.

[155] *Eph.*, IV, 1.

[156] *Haerent animo,* 4 Aug. 1908 (*A. A. S.*, vol. 41, pp. 555-577).

[157] Ibid., p. 575.

[158] Litt. Encycl. *Mens Nostra,* 20 Dec. 1929 (*A. A. S.*, vol. XXI (1929), pp. 689-706).

into life everlasting,[159] this inexhaustible fountain providentially opened by God to His Church. Again now, to you My Dear Brethren, who are all the closer to Us because you work more directly with Us to establish the kingdom of Christ upon earth, We believe We cannot give better proof of Our Fatherly affection than by exhorting you most fervently to make use of this means of sanctification, to the best of your abilities. Take for your guide those principles and norms laid down by Us in the above mentioned Encyclical. It is not enough to withdraw to the sacred seclusion of the Spiritual Exercises only at the intervals and in the exact measure prescribed by ecclesiastical law[160] but you should enter into retreat more often and for longer periods, as far as possible to you, and you should consecrate, in addition, a day of each month to more fervent prayer and greater recollection,[161] according to the practice of priests of greater zeal.

FRUITS OF RETREATS AND RECOLLECTION

In such retreats and recollection even one who may have entered *in sortem Domini,* not by the straight way of a true vocation, but for earthly or less noble motives, will be able to "stir up the grace of God."[162] For he, too, is now indissolubly bound to God and the Church, and so nothing remains for him but to follow the advice of St. Bernard: "If sanctity of life did not precede, let

[159] Cf. JOHN, IV, 14.

[160] Cf. *Cod. Iur. Can.,* cc. 126, 595, 1001, 1367.

[161] Cf. Litt. Encycl. *Mens Nostra* circa finem: *A. A. S.,* vol. XXI (1929), p. 705.

[162] *II Tim.,* I, 6.

it at least follow . . . for the future make good your ways and ambitions and make holy your ministry." [163] The grace of God, and specifically that grace proper to the Sacrament of Holy Orders, will not fail to lend aid, if he sincerely wishes to correct whatever was originally amiss in his purpose or conduct. However it may have come about that he undertook the obligations of the priesthood, the abiding grace of this divine sacrament will not be wanting in power to enable him to fulfill them.

NEED FOR SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Each and all of you, then, from the recollection and prayer of a retreat will come out fortified against the snares of the world, quickened by lively zeal for the salvation of souls, and enkindled with the love of God, as befits priests in times like the present. For together with so much corruption and diabolical malice, there is everywhere felt a powerful religious and spiritual awakening, a breath of the Holy Spirit, sent forth over the world to sanctify it, and to renew with its creative force the face of the earth.[164] Filled with the Holy Ghost you will communicate this love of God like a holy fire to all who approach you, becoming in a true sense bearers of Christ in a disordered society, which can hope for salvation from Jesus Christ alone, since He, and He alone, is ever "the true Saviour of the world." [165]

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[163] ST. BERN. ABB., *Epist. 27 ad Arduitionem* (MIGNE, *P. L.*, 182, 131).

[164] Cf. *Ps. 103*, 30.

[165] JOHN, IV, 42.

Before concluding, We turn Our thoughts and Our words, with very special tenderness to you who are still in your studies for the priesthood; and urge you from the depth of Our heart to prepare yourselves with all seriousness for the great task to which God calls you. You are the hope of the Church and of the people, who look for so much, or rather everything, to you. For to you they look for that living and life-giving knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, in which is eternal life.[166] In piety, purity, humility, obedience, discipline and study strive then to make yourselves priests after the Heart of God; We assure you that in the task of fitting yourselves for the priesthood by solid virtue and learning, no care, no diligence, no energy can be too great; because upon it so largely depend all your future apostolic labours. See to it that on the day of your ordination to the priesthood, the Church find you in fact such as she wishes you to be, that is "replenished with heavenly wisdom, irreproachable in life and established in the ways of grace," so that "the sweet odour of your life may be a delight to the Church of Christ, that both by word and good example you may build the house, that is, the family of God." [167]

CONTINUE TRADITIONS OF PRIESTHOOD

Only thus can you continue the glorious traditions of the Catholic priesthood and hasten that most auspicious hour when it will be given to all humanity to enjoy the fruits of the peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ.

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[166] Cf. JOHN, XVIII, 3.

[167] *Pont. Rom.*, de Ordinat. Presbyt.

And before concluding Our letter, to you, Venerable Brethren in the Episcopate, and through you to all Our beloved sons of both clergy, We are happy to add a solemn proof of Our gratitude for the holy co-operation by which, under your guidance and example, this Holy Year of Redemption has been made so fruitful to souls. We wish to perpetuate the memory and the glory of that Priesthood, of which Ours and yours, Venerable Brethren, and that of all priests of Christ, is but a participation and continuation. We have thought it opportune, after consulting the Sacred Congregation of Rites, to prepare a special votive Mass, for Thursdays, according to liturgical rules: *De summo et aeterno Iesu Christi Sacerdotio,* to honour "Jesus Christ, Supreme and Eternal Priest." It is Our pleasure and consolation to publish this Mass together with this, Our Encyclical Letter.

HOLY FATHER'S APOSTOLIC BLESSING

There only remains for Us, Venerable Brethren, to impart to all the Apostolic and Paternal Benediction, which all expect and desire from their common Father. May it be a blessing of thanksgiving for all the benefits poured out by Divine Providence in these Extraordinary Holy Years of the Redemption; may it be a blessing of good augury for the new year which is about to begin.

Given at Rome, at Saint Peter's, the twentieth day of December 1935, in the fifty-sixth anniversary of Our priesthood, the fourteenth of Our Pontificate.

PIUS PP. XI.

RANSDELL INCORPORATED WASHINGTON, D. C.

MOTION PICTURES

Encyclical Letter

of

His Holiness, Pope Pius XI

NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE CONFERENCE
1312 Massachusetts Avenue
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Encyclical Letter of Pope Pius XI

on

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Encyclical Letter

("*Vigilanti Cura*")

TO OUR VENERABLE BRETHREN,
THE ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
AND TO OTHER ORDINARIES ENJOYING PEACE
AND COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE

On Motion Pictures

POPE PIUS XI

VENERABLE BRETHREN
GREETINGS AND APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION

IN FOLLOWING with vigilant eye, as Our pastoral office requires, the beneficent works of Our Brethren in the Episcopate and of the faithful, it has been highly pleasing to us to learn of the fruits already gathered and of the progress which continues to be made by that prudent initiative launched more than two years ago as a holy crusade against the abuses of motion pictures, and which was in a special manner entrusted to "The Legion of Decency."

It is an excellent experiment, that now offers Us a most welcome opportunity, manifesting more fully Our thought in regard to a matter which touches intimately the moral and religious life of the entire Christian People.

GRATITUDE EXPRESSED TO HIERARCHY OF U. S.

First of all, We express Our gratitude to the Hierarchy in the United States of America, to the faithful who cooperated with them, for the important results already achieved, under their direction and guidance, by the "Legion of Decency." And Our gratitude is all the livelier for the fact that We were deeply anguished to note with each passing day the lamentable progress, *magni passus extra viam,* of the motion picture art and industry in the portrayal of sin and vice.

Part I

As often as the occasion has presented itself, We have considered it the duty of Our high office to direct to this condition the attention not only of the Episcopate and clergy, but also of all men who are right-minded and solicitous for the public weal.

In Our Encyclical *Divini Illius Magistri,* We had already deplored that "potent instrumentalities of publicity (such as motion pictures), which might be of great advantage to learning and education, were they properly directed by healthy principles, often unfortunately serve as an incentive to evil and passion and are subordinated to sordid gain."

In August of 1934, addressing Ourselves to a delegation of the International Federation of the Motion Picture Press, We pointed out the very great importance which the motion picture has acquired in our days, and its vast influence alike in promotion of good and insinuation of evil. We called to mind that it is necessary to apply to the cinema a supreme rule which must direct and regulate even the highest

art in order that it may not find itself in continual conflict with Christian morality, or even simply with human morality based upon natural law. The essential purpose of art, its *raison d'etre,* is to assist in the perfecting of the moral personality, which is man. For this reason it must itself be moral.

And We concluded, amid the manifest approval of that elect body—a memory still dear to Us—by recommending to them the necessity of making the motion picture "moral, an influence for good morals, an educator."

And even as recently as April of this year, when We had the happiness to receive in audience a group of delegates of the International Congress of the Motion Picture Press held in Rome, We again drew attention to the gravity of the problem, and warmly exhorted all men of good will, in the name not only of religion but also of the true moral and civil welfare of the people, to use every means in their power, such as the press, to make of the cinema a valuable auxiliary of instruction and education rather than of destruction and ruin of the soul.

The subject, however, is of such paramount importance in itself, and because of the present condition of society, that We deem it necessary to return to it again, not alone for the purpose of making particular recommendations as on past occasions, but rather with a universal outlook, which while embracing the needs of your own dioceses, Venerable Brethren, takes into consideration those of the entire Catholic world.

It is, in fact, urgently necessary to make provision that in this field also, progress of art, science and human technique in the industry, since they are all true gifts of God, may be ordained to His glory

and to the salvation of souls, and may be made to serve in a practical way to promote the extension of the Kingdom of God upon earth. Thus, the Church bids us pray that we may all profit by them in such manner as not to lose the eternal good: *sic transeamus per bona temporalia ut non amittamus aeterna.*

LEGION OF DECENCY IS WARMLY PRAISED

Now, then, it is a certainty which can readily be verified that the more marvelous is the progress of the motion picture art and industry, the more pernicious and deadly has it shown itself to morality, religion and even to the very decencies of human society.

The directors of the industry in the United States recognized this fact themselves, when they confessed that the responsibility before the people and the world was their very own. In the agreement entered into by common accord in March, 1930, solemnly sealed, signed and published in the press, they formally pledged themselves to safeguard in the future the moral welfare of patrons of the motion picture.

It is promised in this agreement that no film which lowers the moral standard of spectators, which casts discredit on natural or human laws, or arouses sympathy for their violation, will be produced.

Nevertheless, in spite of this wise and spontaneously taken decision, those responsible showed themselves incapable of carrying it into effect. It appeared operators were not disposed to stand by principles to which they obligated themselves. Since, therefore, the above-mentioned undertakings proved they have but slight effect, since the parade of vice and crime continued on the screen, the road seemed

almost closed to those who sought honest diversion in the motion picture.

In this crisis, you, Venerable Brethren, were among the first to study the means of safeguarding the souls entrusted to your care. You launched the "Legion of Decency" as a crusade for public morality designed to revitalize the ideals of natural and Christian rectitude. Far from you was the thought of doing damage to the motion picture industry; rather, indeed, did you arm it beforehand against the ruin which menaces every form of recreation which in the guise of art degenerates into corruption.

Your leadership calls forth the prompt and devoted loyalty of your faithful people. Millions of American Catholics signed the pledge of the "Legion of Decency" binding themselves not to attend any motion picture which was offensive to Catholic moral principles or to the proper standards of living. We thus were able to proclaim joyfully that few problems of these latter times have so closely united the Bishops and the people as the one resolved by cooperation in this holy crusade. Not only Catholics, but also high-minded Protestants and Jews and many others accepted your lead and joined their efforts with yours in restoring wise standards, both artistic and moral, to the motion picture.

URGES CONTINUANCE OF FILM CRUSADE

It is an exceedingly great comfort to Us to note the outstanding success of the crusade. Because of your vigilance and because of the pressure which has been brought to bear by public opinion, the motion picture has shown improvement from the moral standpoint: crime and vice are portrayed less fre-

quently; sin no longer is so openly approved or acclaimed; false ideals of life no longer are presented in so flagrant a manner to the impressionable minds of youth.

Although in certain quarters it was predicted that artistic values in the motion picture would be impaired seriously by the reform insisted upon by the "Legion of Decency," it appears quite the contrary happened and the "Legion of Decency" has given no little impetus to efforts to advance the cinema on the road to noble artistic significance by directing it towards the production of classic masterpieces as well as of original creations of uncommon worth.

Nor have financial investments in the industry suffered, as was foretold gratuitously by many. Those who stayed away from the motion picture theater because it outraged morality are patronizing it now that they are able to enjoy clean films which are not offensive to good morals or dangerous to Christian virtue.

UNCEASING VIGILANCE COUNSELED BY POPE

When you started your crusade, it was said your efforts would be of short duration and the effects would not be lasting because, as the vigilance of Bishops and the faithful gradually diminished, the producers would be free to return again to their former methods. It is not difficult to understand why certain of these might be desirous of going back to sinister themes which pandered to base desires and which you have proscribed. While representation of subjects of real artistic value and the portrayal of vicissitudes of human virtue require intellectual efforts, toil and ability and at times

considerable outlay of money, it is often relatively easy to attract a certain type of person and certain classes of people to theaters which present picture plays calculated to inflame passions and arouse lower instincts latent in human hearts.

Unceasing universal vigilance must, on the contrary, convince the producers that the "Legion of Decency" has not been started as a crusade of short duration, soon to be neglected and forgotten, but that the Bishops of the United States are determined at all times and at all costs to safeguard the recreation of the people in whatever form that recreation may take.

Part II

Recreation in its manifold variety has become a necessity of people who labor under the fatiguing conditions of modern industry. But it must be worthy of the rational nature of man and therefore must be morally healthy. It must be elevated to the rank of a positive factor for good, and must seek to arouse a noble sentiment. A people who, in time of repose, give themselves to diversions which violate decency, honor or morality; to recreations which, especially to the young, constitute occasions for sin, are in grave danger of losing their greatest, even their national power.

It admits of no discussion that the motion picture has achieved in these last years a position of universal importance among modern means of diversion.

There is no need to point out the fact that millions of people go to motion pictures every day; that motion picture theaters are being opened in ever-

increasing numbers in civilized and semi-civilized countries; that the motion picture has become the most popular form of diversion which is offered for the leisure moments, not only of the rich, but of all classes of society.

At the same time there exists today no means of influencing the masses more potent than the cinema. The reason for this is to be sought for in the very nature of the pictures projected upon the screens, in the popularity of the motion picture plays and in the circumstances which accompany them.

PECULIAR POWER OF MOTION PICTURE

The power of the motion picture consists in this: that it speaks by means of vivid and concrete imagery, which the mind takes in with enjoyment and without fatigue.

Even the crudest and most primitive minds, which have neither the capacity nor the desire to make the efforts necessary for abstraction or deductive reasoning, are captivated by the cinema. In place of the efforts which reading or listening demand, there is the continued pleasure of a succession of concrete and, so to speak, living pictures.

This power is still greater in the talking picture, for the reason that the interpretation becomes even easier and the charm of music is added to the action and drama. The dances and variety acts which sometimes are introduced between films serve to increase the stimulation of the pageant.

Since, then, the cinema is in reality an object lesson which, for good or for evil, teaches the majority of men more effectively than abstract reasoning, it must be elevated to conformity with

the aims of the Christian conscience and saved from depraving or demoralizing effects.

Bad Films Occasion Sin and Create Prejudices

Everyone knows what damage is done to the soul by bad motion pictures. They are occasions of sin; they seduce young people along the ways of evil by glorifying the passions; they show life under a false light; they cloud ideals; they destroy pure love, respect for marriage and affection for the family. They are capable also of creating prejudices among individuals, misunderstandings among nations, among social classes, and among entire races.

On the other hand, good motion pictures are capable of exercising a profoundly moral influence upon those who see them. In addition to affording recreation, they are able to arouse noble ideals of life, to communicate valuable conceptions, to impart better knowledge of the history and beauties of the fatherland and other countries, to present truth and virtue under attractive forms, to create at least the flavor of understanding among nations, social classes and races, to champion the cause of justice, to give new life to the claims of virtue, to contribute positively to the genesis of a just social order in the world.

These considerations take on greater seriousness from the fact that the cinema speaks not to individuals but to multitudes, and does so in circumstances, time, place and surroundings which are the most apt to arouse unusual enthusiasm for good as well as for bad and to conduce to that collective exultation which, as experience teaches us, may assume the most morbid form.

A motion picture is viewed by people who are seated in a dark theater, and whose faculties, mental, physical and often spiritual, are relaxed. One does not need to go far in search of these theaters: they are close to home, to church, to school, and they thus bring the cinema to the very center of popular life.

THEATERS BRING CINEMA TO CENTER OF POPULAR LIFE

Moreover, the acting out of the plot is done by men and women selected for their art, for all those natural gifts, the employment of those expedients, which can become, for youth particularly, the instruments of seduction. Further, the motion picture has enlisted in its service luxurious appointments, pleasing music, the vigor of realism and every form of whim and fancy. For this very reason it attracts and fascinates particularly the young, adolescent, or even the child. Thus, at the very age when moral sense is being formed, when notions and sentiments of justice and rectitude, of duty, obligations and ideals of life are being developed, the motion picture, with its direct propaganda, assumes a position of commanding influence.

It is unfortunate that in the present state of affairs this influence is frequently exerted for evil. So much so that when one thinks of the havoc wrought in the souls of youth and childhood, of the loss of innocence so often suffered in motion picture theaters, there comes to mind the terrible condemnation pronounced by Our Lord upon the corrupters of little ones: "But he that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better

for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea."

CALLS ON BISHOPS OF ENTIRE WORLD

It is therefore one of the supreme necessities of Our time to watch and to labor to the end that the motion picture be no longer a school of corruption but that it be transformed into an effectual instrument for the education and elevation of mankind.

And here We record with pleasure that certain governments, in their anxiety over the influence exercised by the cinema in the moral and educational fields, have with the aid of upright and honest persons, especially fathers, mothers and families, set up reviewing commissions and constituted other agencies which have to do with motion picture production, in an effort to direct motion pictures, for inspiration, to national works of great poets and writers.

It was most fitting and desirable that you, Venerable Brethren, should have exercised a special watchfulness over the motion picture industry which your country so highly developed and which is a great influence in other quarters of the globe. It is equally the duty of Bishops of the entire Catholic world to unite in vigilance over this universal and potent form of entertainment and instruction, to the end that they may be able to place a ban on bad motion pictures because they are an offense to moral and religious sentiment and because they are in opposition to the Christian spirit and to its ethical principles.

There must be no weariness in combating what-

ever contributes to lessening the peoples' sense of decency and honor.

OBLIGATION WHICH BINDS BISHOPS AND FAITHFUL

This is the obligation which binds not only Bishops, but also the faithful, and all decent men who are solicitous for the decorum and moral health of the family, the nation and human society in general.

In what, then, must this vigilance consist?

Part III

The problem of the production of moral films would be solved radically if it were possible for us to have the production wholly inspired by the principles of Christian morality. We can never sufficiently praise all those who have dedicated themselves, or who are to dedicate themselves, to the noble cause of raising the standard of the motion picture to meet the needs of education and the requirements of Christian conscience.

For this purpose they must make full use of the technical ability of experts, and not permit the waste of effort and money by the employment of amateurs.

But since We know how difficult it is to organize such an industry, especially because of considerations of a financial nature, and since on the other hand it is necessary to influence the production of all films so they may contain nothing harmful from the religious, moral or social viewpoint, pastors of souls must exercise their vigilance over films

wherever they may be produced or offered to Christian peoples.

As to the motion picture industry itself, We exhort Bishops of all countries, but in particular you, Venerable Brethren, to address your appeal to those Catholics who hold important positions in this industry. Let them take serious thought of their duties and the responsibility which they have as children of the Church to use their influence and authority for the promotion of the principles of sound morality in the films which they produce or aid in producing.

The number of Catholics who are executives, directors, authors or actors is not inconsiderable, and it is unfortunate their influence has not always been in accordance with their Faith and their ideals. You will do well, Venerable Brethren, to pledge them to bring their profession into harmony with their conscience as respectable men and followers of Jesus Christ.

In this, as in every other field, the apostolate of pastors of souls will surely find the best collaborators in those who fight in the ranks of Catholic Action, and in this letter We cannot refrain from addressing to them a warm appeal that they give this cause their full contribution and their unwearying and unfailing activity.

From time to time Bishops will do well to recall to the motion picture industry that amid the cares of their pastoral ministry they, as Bishops, are under obligation to interest themselves in every form of decent and healthy recreation because they are responsible before God for the moral welfare of their people, even during their leisure.

MUST PROCLAIM DANGER TO NATION'S MORAL FIBRE

Their sacred calling constrains them to proclaim clearly and openly that unhealthy and impure entertainment destroys the moral fibre of the nation. They will likewise remind the motion picture industry that the demands they make regard not only Catholics, but all who patronize the cinema.

In particular, you, Venerable Brethren of the United States, will be able to insist with justice that the industry in your country has recognized and accepted its responsibility before society.

The Bishops of the whole world will take care to make clear to leaders of the motion picture industry that the force of such a power of universality as the cinema can be directed with great utility to the highest ends of individual and social improvement. Why, indeed, should there be a question of merely avoiding evil? Why should the motion picture simply be a means of diversion and light relaxation to occupy an idle hour? With its magnificent power, it can and must be a light and a positive guide to what is good.

And now, in view of the gravity of the subject, we consider it timely to come down to certain practical indications.

ANNUAL PLEDGES; LISTS IN THREE CATEGORIES

Above all, all pastors of souls will undertake to obtain each year from their people a pledge similar to the one already alluded to which was given by their American brothers, in which they promised to stay away from motion picture plays which were offensive to truth and Christian morality.

The most efficacious manner of obtaining these

pledges promises to be through the parish church or school, by enlisting the earnest cooperation of all fathers and mothers of families who are conscious of their grave responsibility.

The Bishops will also be able to avail themselves of the Catholic Press for the purpose of bringing home to the people the moral duty and effectiveness of this promise.

The fulfillment of this pledge supposes that the people will be made clearly aware of which films are permitted to all, which are permitted with reservations and which are harmful or positively bad. This requires prompt, regular and frequent publication of classified lists of motion picture plays so as to make the information readily accessible to all. Special bulletins or other timely publications such as the daily Catholic Press may be used for this purpose.

REVIEWING OFFICES FOR EACH COUNTRY

Were it possible, it would in itself be desirable to establish a single list for the entire world, because all live under the same moral laws. Since, however, there is here a question of pictures which interest all classes of society, the great and the humble, the learned and the unlettered, the judgment passed upon the film cannot be the same in each case in all respects.

Indeed, circumstances, usages and forms vary from country to country, so it does not seem practical to have a single list for all the world. If, however, films were classified in each country in the manner indicated above, the resultant list would offer in principle the guidance needed.

Therefore, it will be necessary that in each country

the Bishops set up a permanent national reviewing office in order to be able to promote good motion pictures, classify others and bring this judgment to the knowledge of the priests and the faithful. It will be very proper to entrust this agency to the central organization of Catholic Action which is dependent on the Bishops. At all events, it must clearly be laid down that this service of information, in order to function organically and with efficiency, must be on a national basis, that is, it must be carried on by a single central responsibility.

INDIVIDUAL BISHOPS CAN APPLY SEVERER CRITERIONS

Should grave reasons really require it, Their Excellencies the Bishops, in their own dioceses through their diocesan reviewing committees, will be able to apply to a national list—which must use standards adaptable to the whole nation—such severer criterions as may be demanded by the character of the region. They may even censor films which are admitted to the general list.

The above-mentioned office likewise will look after the organization of the existing motion picture theaters belonging to parish Catholic associations, so that they may be guaranteed reviewed approval of films. Through the organization of these halls, which often represent a considerable clientele for the industry, it will be possible to advance a new demand, namely, that the industry produce motion pictures which correspond entirely to our principles. Such films then may readily be shown, not only in Catholic halls but also in others.

We realize the establishment of such an office will

involve a certain sacrifice, a certain expense for Catholics of the various countries. Yet the great importance of the motion picture, the necessity of safeguarding the morality of Christian people and of the entire nation, make this sacrifice more than justified. Indeed, the effectiveness of our schools, of our Catholic associations and even of our churches is lessened and endangered by the plague of evil and pernicious motion pictures.

Information Exchange Among the Countries

The office force must be composed of persons who are familiar with the technique of the motion picture and who at the same time are well-grounded in the principles of Catholic morality and doctrines. They must, in addition, be under the guidance and direct supervision of a priest chosen by the Bishop.

Opportune understandings for the exchange of that information among offices of the various countries will conduce to greater efficiency and harmony in the work of reviewing films, while due consideration will be given to varying conditions and circumstances.

It will thus be possible to achieve unity of outlook in the judgments and communications appearing in the Catholic Press of the world.

These offices will profit, not only by the experiments made in the United States, but also by the accomplishments of Catholics of other countries in the motion picture field.

Even if employees of the office—with the best good will and intentions—should make an occasional mistake, as happens in all human affairs, the Bishops in their pastoral prudence will know how to

apply effective remedies to safeguard in every possible way the authority and prestige of the office itself. This may be done by strengthening the staff with more influential men or by replacing those who have shown themselves less capable of performing their delicate duties.

WILL ACCOMPLISH GREAT WORK FOR MORALITY OF THEIR PEOPLE

If the Bishops of the world assume their share in the exercise of this painstaking vigilance over the motion picture—and of this We, who know their pastoral zeal, have no doubt—they will certainly accomplish a great work for the protection of the morality of their people during their moments of leisure and recreation.

They will win the approbation and approval of all right-thinking men, Catholic and non-Catholic, and they will help assure that this great international force—the motion picture—shall be directed toward the noble end of promoting the highest ideals and the truest standard of life.

That these desires which spring up in Our paternal heart may be realized, We implore the help of the grace of God; and in pledge thereof, We impart to you, Venerable Brethren, and to the clergy and the people entrusted to you, Our affectionate and Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, the twenty-ninth day of June, the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, in the year of Our Lord 1936, the fifteenth of Our Pontificate.

PIUS XI, POPE.

THE CHURCH IN GERMANY

Encyclical Letter

(Mit brennender Sorge)

of

His Holiness, Pope Pius XI

(Vatican Press Translation)

Issued March 14, 1937

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on

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Encyclical Letter

TO THE VENERABLE

ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS OF GERMANY

AND OTHER ORDINARIES IN PEACE

AND COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE

On the Condition of the Church in Germany

POPE PIUS XI

VENERABLE BRETHREN

GREETING AND APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION

1. With deep anxiety and increasing dismay, We have for some time past beheld the sufferings of the Church, and the steadily growing oppression of those men and women who, loyally professing their faith in thought and deed, have remained true to her amidst the people of that land to which St. Boniface once brought the light and glad tidings of Christ and the Kingdom of God.

2. This anxiety of Ours has not been lessened by the accurate reports dutifully brought to Us by the representatives of the most reverend episcopate, who came to visit at Our sick-bed. They related much that is consoling and edifying about the struggle for religion that is being waged by the faithful, and yet, despite their love for their people and their fatherland, with every possible attempt to reach a dispassionate judgment, they could not pass over much that is bitter and sad. After receiving their accounts, We could say in great

thankfulness to God: "I have no greater grace than this, to hear that my children walk in truth." [1] But the frankness befitting Our responsible apostolic office, and the desire to place before your eyes and those of the entire Christian world the actual facts in all their gravity, require Us to add: A greater anxiety, a more bitter suffering in Our pastoral care, We have not, than to hear "many leave the way of truth." [2]

3. In the summer of 1933, Venerable Brethren, We accepted the offer made by the Government of the Reich to institute negotiations for a Concordat in connection with a proposal of the previous year, and to the satisfaction of you all brought them to a conclusion with a solemn agreement. In this We were guided by the solicitude incumbent on Us to safeguard the freedom of the Church in the exercise of her apostolic ministry in Germany and the salvation of the souls entrusted to her, and at the same time by the sincere wish of rendering an essential service to the progress and prosperity of the German people.

4. In spite of many serious misgivings at the time, We forced Ourselves to decide that We should not withhold Our consent. We wished to spare Our faithful sons and daughters in Germany, so far as was humanly possible, the anxiety and suffering which, in the given circumstances, We would certainly have otherwise had to expect. Through Our act We wished to prove to all, that seeking only Christ and the things of Christ, We

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[1] III John, 1, 4.
[2] II Peter, 2, 3.

do not refuse the hand of peace of Mother Church to anyone who does not himself reject it.

5. If the tree of peace which We planted with pure intention in German soil has not borne the fruit We desired in the interests of your people, no one in the wide world who has eyes to see and ears to hear can say today that the fault lies with the Church and her Head. The lessons of the past years make it clear where the responsibility lies. They disclose machinations that from the beginning had no other aim than a war of extermination. In the furrows where We labored to plant the seeds of sincere peace, others were sowing—like the enemy in Holy Scripture [3]—the tares of distrust, of discord, hatred, calumny, of secret and open enmity against Christ and His Church, an enmity in principle, fed from a thousand springs and working with every means at its disposal. With them and only with them, as well as with their open and silent supporters, lies the responsibility that now, instead of the rainbow of peace, the storm-clouds of destructive religious conflicts are visible on the German horizon.

6. We have not tired, Venerable Brethren, of portraying to the responsible guides of the destinies of your country the consequences that necessarily follow if such trends are left unhindered and much more if they are viewed with favor. We have done everything to defend the sanctity of a word solemnly pledged, to protect the inviolability of obligations, freely undertaken, against theories and practices which, if officially approved, must

[3] Matthew, 13, 25.

destroy all confidence and render valueless any word that might also be pledged in the future. When once the time shall have come to place before the eyes of the world these Our endeavors, all right-minded persons will know where they have to look for those who kept the peace, and where for those who broke it. Everyone in whose mind there is left the least perception of the truth, in whose heart there is a trace of feeling for justice, will then have to admit that in these grievous and eventful years after the signing of the Concordat, in every word and in every action of Ours, We have stood faithful to the terms of the agreement. But with amazement and deep aversion he will be obliged to admit that to change the meaning of the agreement, to evade the agreement, to empty the agreement of all its significance, and finally more or less openly to violate the agreement, has been made the unwritten law of conduct by the other party.

7. The moderation We have shown in spite of everything was neither dictated by considerations of human expediency nor motivated by unseemly weakness, but simply by the desire that We might not perchance tear up valuable wheat with the tares; by the intention not to pronounce judgment openly until minds were made ready for the inevitability of this judgment; by the determination not to deny definitively the good faith of others before the hard language of facts had torn away the coverings under which a systematic camouflage has been able and is able to disguise the attack on the Church. Even today, when the open campaign waged against the denominational school

guaranteed by the Concordat, when the nullification of the freedom of the vote for Catholics who should have the right to decide in the matter of education, shows the dreadful seriousness of the situation in a most important field of the Church's life and the unparalleled torment of conscience of believing Christians, Our pastoral care for the salvation of souls counsels Us not to leave unheeded even the slight prospects of return to a loyal adherence to a responsible agreement. In compliance with the prayers of the Most Reverend Episcopate, We shall not weary in the future also of pleading the cause of outraged right with the rulers of your people. Unconcerned with the success or failure of the day and obeying only Our conscience and in accordance with Our pastoral mission, We shall oppose an attitude of mind that seeks to stifle chartered right with open or covered violence.

8. The purpose of the present letter however, Venerable Brethren, is a different one. As you kindly visited Us as We lay on Our bed of sickness, so today We turn to you and through you to the Catholic faithful of Germany, who, like all suffering and oppressed children, are particularly close to the heart of the Common Father. In this hour, when their faith is being tried like pure gold in the fire of tribulation and concealed and open persecution, when they are surrounded by a thousand forms of organized bondage in matters of religion, when the lack of true information and absence of the customary means of defense weigh heavy on them, they have a double right to words of truth and spiritual comfort from him, to whose first predecessor the significant words of the Savour were

spoken: "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren." [4]

TRUE BELIEF IN GOD

9. Take care, Venerable Brethren, that first of all belief in God, the primary and irreplaceable foundation of all religion, be preserved true and unadulterated in German lands. He is not a believer in God who uses the word of God rhetorically but he who associates with the sacred word the true and worthy idea of God.

10. He who, in pantheistic vagueness, equates God with the universe, and identifies God with the world and the world with God does not belong to believers in God.

11. He who replaces a personal God with a weird impersonal Fate supposedly according to ancient pre-Christian German concepts denies the wisdom and providence of God, that "reacheth from end to end mightily and ordereth all things sweetly" [5] and directs everything for the best. Such a one cannot claim to be numbered among those who believe in God.

12. He who takes the race, or the people, or the State, or the form of Government, the bearers of the power of the State or other fundamental elements of human society—which in the temporal order of things have an essential and honorable place—out of the system of their earthly valuation, and makes them the ultimate norm of all,

[4] Luke, 22, 32.
[5] Wisdom, 8, 1.

even of religious, values, and deifies them with an idolatrous worship, perverts and falsifies the order of things created and commanded by God. Such a one is far from true belief in God and a conception of life corresponding to true belief.

13. Beware, Venerable Brethren, of the growing abuse in speech and writing, of using the thrice holy name of God as a meaningless label for a more or less capricious form of human search and longing. Work among your faithful that they may be vigilant to reject this aberration as it deserves. Our God is the personal, superhuman, almighty, infinitely perfect God, one in the Trinity of persons, threefold in the unity of the Divine essence, the Creator of the universe, the Lord and King in whom the history of the world finds fulfillment, Who suffers and can suffer no other god beside Him.

14. This God has given His commandments in His capacity as Sovereign. They apply regardless of time and space, country or race. As God's sun shines on all that bear human countenance, so does His law know no privileges or exceptions. The rulers and the ruled, crowned and uncrowned, high and low, rich and poor, all alike are subject to His law. From the sum total of His rights as Creator flows connaturally the sum total of His claims to obedience on the part of the individual and every kind of society. This claim to obedience comprehends every walk of life, in which moral questions demand a settlement in harmony with God's law and consequently the adjustment of transitory human legislation to the structure of the immutable law of God. Only superficial minds

can lapse into the heresy of speaking of a national God, of a national religion; only such can make the mad attempt of trying to confine within the boundaries of a single people, within the narrow blood stream of a single race, God the Creator of the world, the King and Lawgiver of all peoples before whose greatness all peoples are small as a drop of a bucket.[6]

15. The Bishops of the Church of Christ set up "for the things that appertain to God" [7] must be watchful that such pernicious errors, which are usually followed by more pernicious practices, find no foothold among the faithful. It is the holy duty of your office, as far as in you lies, to do everything to bring it about that the commandments of God shall be regarded and obeyed as the obligatory basis of morally ordered private and public life, that the sovereign rights of God, the name and the word of God, be not blasphemed;[8] that the blasphemies—in word, writing and picture, at times countless as the sands by the sea—be made to cease; that over against the defying Promethean spirit of deniers, scorners and haters of God the propitiatory prayer of the faithful never falters but that, like incense, it may rise hour after hour to the Most High and stay His hand raised to punish.

16. We thank you, Venerable Brethren, your priests and all the faithful, who have done and continue to do their duty in defending the sovereign rights of God against the aggressive neo-paganism

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[6] Is., 40, 15.
[7] Heb., 5, 1.
[8] Tit., 2, 5.

that unfortunately in many instances is favored in influential quarters. Our thanks are doubly sincere and coupled with admiration and approval of those who in the exercise of their duty were found worthy of making earthly sacrifices for God's sake and of enduring earthly suffering.

True Belief in Christ

17. No belief in God will in the long run be preserved pure and genuine, if it is not supported by belief in Christ: "No one knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither does any one know the Father, but the Son and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal him." [9] "This is eternal life: that they may know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." [10] Hence no one may say: I am a believer in God; that is religion enough for me. The words of the Saviour allow no room for this kind of evasion. "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father. He that confesseth the Son hath also the Father." [11]

18. The fulness of divine revelation has appeared in Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God. "God, Who at sundry times and divers manners spoke in times past to the fathers through the prophets, in the fulness of time hath spoken to us by his Son." [12] The sacred books of the Old Testament are all God's Word, an organic part of His revelation.

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[9] Matthew, 11, 27.
[10] John, 17, 3.
[11] John, 2, 23.
[12] Hebrews, 1, 1.

Corresponding to the gradual unfolding of the revelation, the dimness of the time preceding the full noon day of the redemption hovers over them. As is inevitable in the case of books of history and law, they are the reflections in many particulars of human imperfection, weakness and sin. Side by side with infinitely much that is high and noble, they relate the dissipation and worldliness that occurred time and again among the covenanted people who bore the revelation and promise of God.

19. Yet for every eye not blinded by prejudice and passion out of the human failings, of which the Bible history speaks, shines forth all the more clearly the divine light of the work of salvation finally triumphant over all defects and sin. God's pedagogy of salvation develops on such a background oftentimes dark into perspectives that point the way, warn, fill with dread, elevate and make happy at the same time. Only blindness and pride can close their eyes to the treasures of instruction for salvation, that are in the Old Testament. He who wants to see the Biblical history and the wisdom of the Old Testament banished from the Church and school, blasphemes the Word of God, blasphemes the Almighty's plan of salvation, makes the narrow and limited mind of man judge over the divine plan of history. He denies belief in the real Christ, Who appeared in the flesh, Who took His human nature from that people which was to nail Him to the cross. He stands uncomprehendingly before the world-drama of the Son of God Who opposed to the felony of His crucifiers the Divine high-priestly action of the Redeemer's death and thus brought the Old Testa-

ment to its fulfilment and completion in the New, by which it is superseded.

20. The climax of revelation reached in the Gospel of Jesus Christ is definite, is obligatory for ever. This revelation knows no addition from the hand of man, above all, knows no substitution and no replacement by arbitrary "revelations" that certain speakers of the present day wish to derive from the myth of blood and race. Since Christ, the Anointed, accomplished the work of redemption, broke the dominion of sin, and merited for us the grace of becoming children of God—since then no other name has been given under heaven to men, through which they can be saved, but the name of Jesus.[13] No man, though all knowledge, all power, all outward might on earth should be embodied in him, can lay any other foundation than that which is already laid in Christ.[14] He who sacrilegiously disregarding the yawning abyss of essential distinction between God and creature, between the God-Man and the children of men, dares to place any mortal, were he the greatest of all times, beside Christ, or worse, above Him and against Him, must be told that he is a false prophet, in whom the words of Scripture find terrible application: "He that dwelleth in heaven, shall laugh at them."[15]

TRUE BELIEF IN THE CHURCH

21. Belief in Christ will not be preserved true and genuine, if not supported and protected by

[13] Acts, 4, 12.
[14] I Cor., 3, 11.
[15] Ps., 2, 4.

belief in the Church, "the pillar and ground of the truth." [16] Christ Himself, Godpraised forever in the ages, has erected this pillar of faith. His command, to hear the Church,[17] to hear His own words and commandments [18] in the words and commandments of the Church, is meant for the men of all times and places. The Church founded by the Redeemer is one—for all peoples and nations. Beneath her vault, that like God's firmament arches over the whole earth, there is a place and home for all peoples and tongues; there is room for the development of all the particular qualities, points of excellence, missions and callings, that God has assigned to individuals and peoples. The heart of Mother Church is wide and big enough to see in the development, according to God's purpose, of such special qualities and gifts rather the richness of variety than the danger of separation. She rejoices in the intellectual advancement of individuals and peoples. With the joy and pride of a mother she sees in their genuine achievements the fruits of education and progress, that she blesses and furthers whenever she can in conscience do so. But she knows, too, that limits are set to this freedom by the majesty of God's law that has willed and founded this Church one and indivisible in all essentials. He who touches this unity and indivisibility, takes from the Bride of Christ one of the diadems with which God Himself has crowned her. He subjects her divine structure that rests

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[16] I Timothy, 3, 15.
[17] Matthew, 18, 17.
[18] Luke, 10, 16.

on eternal foundations to the re-examination and remodeling of architects, to whom the Heavenly Father has granted no plenipotentiary powers to build.

22. The divine mission of the Church that works among men and must work through men may be lamentably obscured by human failings that again and again sprout up as tares amid the wheat of God's kingdom. He who has heard the Saviour's word about scandals and those who give scandal, knows how the Church and each individual has to judge on what was sin and is sin. But because of these deplorable discrepancies between believing and living, between word and deed, between the outward conduct and the interior disposition of individuals—even though there might be many such—to forget the immense sum of sincere pursuit of virtue, of the spirit of sacrifice, of brotherly love, of heroic striving after holiness; or worse, to conceal all this knowingly, is to display regrettable blindness and injustice. When it becomes perfectly clear that the hard standard applied to the hated Church is forgotten the very moment there is question of societies of a different nature, felt to be akin in sentiment or interest, then the one who so acts and pretends that he has been offended in his sense of cleanliness, shows that he is related to those who in the cutting words of the Saviour see the mote in their brother's eye, but do not see the beam in their own. Questionable as is the intention of those who make a career, and in many instances a low profession, of busying themselves with human failings in the Church, and though it be true that the authority of him who

holds ecclesiastical office is founded on God and is independent of his human or moral standing; nevertheless, no period of time, no individual, no community is free from the duty of sincere examination of conscience, of unrelenting, of thorough renewal in mind and deed. In Our encyclical on the priesthood, in Our letters on Catholic Action, We pointed out with adjuring insistence the sacred duty of all members of the Church, and particularly members of the priesthood and religious state, that they should bring their belief and conduct into the agreement required by the law of God and demanded by the Church with emphasis. And today We earnestly repeat: It is not enough to be counted a member of the Church of Christ. One must be also a living member of this Church—in spirit and in truth. And only they are such, who are in the grace of the Lord and ever walk in His presence—in innocence or in sincere and efficacious penance. If the Apostle of the Gentiles, the "Vessel of Election," kept his body under the rod of chastisement and mortification in order that he might not, after preaching to others, become himself a castaway,[19] can there be any other way but that of the closest union of apostolate and personal sanctification for the others to whose hands is committed the keeping and increase of the kingdom of God? Only in this way can it be proved to the present generation, and especially to the adversaries of the Church, that the salt of the earth has not lost its savor, that the leaven of Christendom has not become stale, but is capable and ready

[19] I Cor., 9, 27.

to bring to the people of today who are caught in doubt and error, in indifference and perplexity, in weariness in believing and in separation from God, the spiritual renewal and rejuvenation of which they stand, whether they admit it or not, in greater need than ever before. A Christianity that enters into itself in all its members, that strips off all mere outward show and worldliness, that takes the commandments of God seriously, and proves itself in love of God and active love of one's neighbor, can and must be the pattern and leader to a world sick to its very heart and seeking for support and guidance if unspeakable misfortune and a cataclysm far beyond all imagination is not to burst over it.

23. In the final analysis every true and lasting reform has proceeded from the sanctuary; from men who were inflamed and driven by love of God and their neighbor. From their magnanimity and readiness to hearken to every call of God and to realize that call first of all in themselves, they grew in humility and in the conviction of their calling to be luminaries and renewers of their times. When zeal for reform did not spring from the pure source of personal singleness of heart, but was the expression and outbreak of passionate frenzy, it caused confusion instead of bringing light, tore down instead of building up; and not seldom was the point of departure for errors more disastrous than were the evils that it was the intention or the pretended intention to correct. True, the spirit of God breatheth where He will.[20] He can raise

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[20] John, 3, 8.

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up stones to prepare the way for His design.[21] He chooses the instruments of His will according to His Own plans, and not according to those of men. But He Who founded His Church and called it into being in the storm of Pentecost, does not blast the foundation of the establishment He Himself intended for salvation. Those who are moved by the spirit of God have of themselves the proper inward and outward attitude towards the Church, which is the precious fruit on the tree of the Cross, the Pentecostal gift of God's spirit to a world in need of guidance.

24. In your districts, Venerable Brethren, voices are raised in ever louder chorus urging men on to leave the Church. Among the spokesmen there are many who, by reason of their official position, seek to create the impression that leaving the Church, and the disloyalty to Christ the King which it entails, is a particularly convincing and meritorious form of profession of loyalty to the present State. With cloaked and with manifest methods of coercion, by intimidation, by holding out the prospect of economic, professional, civic and other advantages, the loyalty of Catholics and especially of certain classes of Catholic officials to their faith is put under a pressure that is as unlawful as it is unworthy of human beings. All Our fatherly sympathy and deepest condolence We offer to those who pay so high a price for their fidelity to Christ and the Church. But here We reach the point of supreme importance, where it is question of safety or destruction, and where consequently, for the

[21] Matthew, 3, 9; Luke, 3, 8.

believer the way of heroic fortitude is the only way of salvation. When the tempter or oppresser comes to him with the Judas-like suggestion to leave the Church, then, even at the cost of heavy, earthly sacrifices he can only reply in the words of the Saviour: "Begone, Satan: for it is written: The Lord thy God thou shalt adore and Him only shalt thou serve." [22] But to the Church he will say: Thou my Mother from the days of my childhood, my comfort in life, my intercessor in death, may my tongue cleave to my palate, if I, yielding to earthly enticements or threats, should turn traitor to the promises of my baptism. But to those who think that they can continue outward leaving of the Church with inward loyalty to the Church, let the Saviour's words be earnest warning: "He that shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father Who is in heaven." [23]

The Belief in the Primacy

25. Belief in the Church will not be kept pure and genuine if it is not supported by belief in the primacy of the Bishop of Rome. At the very moment when Peter, foremost of all the Apostles and disciples, confessed faith in Christ, the Son of the living God, the answer of Christ rewarding his faith and his confession was the word that speaks of the building of His Church, the one Church, and on Peter the Rock.[24] Belief in Christ, in the Church, in the Primacy are thus connected in the

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[22] Matthew, 4, 10; Luke, 4, 8.
[23] Matthew, 10, 33.
[24] Matthew, 16, 18.

holiest way. Real and lawful authority is everywhere the bond of unity, a source of strength, a security against disruption and dissolution, a pledge for the future; it is so in the highest and holiest sense in the case for the Church where alone to such authority the guidance of grace by the Holy Ghost and His assistance against which nothing can prevail have been promised. When people who do not even agree on their faith in Christ hold before you as a thing to be desired or allure you with the picture of a German national church, know this: it is nothing but the denial of the Church of Christ, a manifest apostasy from the command to evangelize the whole world, to whose fulfillment only a universal church can be commensurate. The history of other national churches, their spiritual torpor, their attachment to or enslavement by earthly powers, shows the hopeless sterility that comes over every branch that separates itself from the living vine of the Church. To be on the alert right from the very start and to oppose an unflinching "No" to such sophistries, is to serve not only the purity of one's faith in Christ, but also the well-being and vital forces of one's people.

No Changing the Sense of Holy Words and Ideas

26. You must be especially alert, Venerable Brethren, when fundamental religious conceptions are robbed of their intrinsic content and made to mean something else in a profane sense.

27. Revelation, in the Christian sense, is the word of God to man. To use the same word for

the "whispered inspirations" of blood and race, for the manifestations of the history of a people, is confusing in any case. Such false coinage does not deserve to be received into the vocabulary of a believing Christian.

28. Faith is the certain holding as true what God has revealed and through His Church proposes for belief, "the evidence of things that appear not." [25] The joyous and proud confidence in the future of one's people, dear to everyone, means something quite different from faith in the religious sense. To play one off against the other, to try to replace one by the other, and thereupon demand to be recognized as a "believer" by the convinced Christian, is an empty play on words or a wilful effacing of distinctions, or worse.

29. Immortality in the Christian sense is the continuance of the life of a man after temporal death, as a personal individual, to be rewarded or punished eternally. To designate with the word immortality the collective continued enjoyment of life in association with the continued existence of one's people on earth for an undetermined length of time in the future, is to pervert and falsify one of the principal truths of the Christian faith and strike at the foundations of every religious philosophy that demands a moral ordering of the world. If they do not want to be Christians, at least they should forego enriching the vocabulary of their unbelief from the Christian treasure of ideas.

30. Original sin is the inherited, though not personal, fault of the descendants of Adam, who

[25] Hebrews, 11, 1.

sinned in him;[26] loss of grace, and therewith loss of eternal life, with the propensity to evil that each one must combat and overcome by grace, penance, struggle and moral endeavor. The passion and death of the Son of God redeemed the world from the inherited curse of sin and death. Faith in these truths that today are clearly scorned in your country by the enemies of Christ belongs to the inalienable substance of the Christian religion.

31. The Cross of Christ, though the mere name may have become to many a folly and a scandal,[27] is still for the Christian the hallowed sign of redemption, the standard of moral greatness and strength. In its shadow we live. In its kiss we die. On our graves it shall stand to proclaim our faith, to witness our hope turned towards the eternal light.

32. Humility in the spirit of the Gospel and prayer for the help of God's grace are compatible with self-respect, self-confidence and heroic purpose. The Church of Christ, that in all ages up to the present time counts more confessors and voluntary martyrs than any other body, does not need to receive instruction from such quarters about heroic purposefulness and heroic achievement. In its shallow twaddle about Christian humility being self-abasement and unheroic conduct, the disgusting pride of these reformers mocks itself.

33. Grace, in the loose sense of the term, can be said to be everything that the creature receives from the Creator. Grace in the proper and Chris-

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[26] Romans, 5, 12.
[27] I Cor., 1, 23.

tian sense of the word embraces, however, the supernatural manifestations of divine love, the loving kindness and working of God, whereby He raises men to that inward participation of life with Himself, that is called in the New Testament sonship of God. "Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called and should be the sons of God." [28] The repudiation of this supernatural elevation of grace on account of the supposedly peculiar German type of being, is an error and an open challenge to a fundamental truth of Christianity. To put supernatural grace on the same level with the gifts of nature robs the vocabulary fashioned and sanctified by the Church. The pastors and guardians of God's people will do well to act with vigilance against this looting of the sanctuary and this work of confusing minds.

Moral Doctrine and Moral Order

34. The moral conduct of mankind is grounded on faith in God kept true and pure. Every attempt to dislodge moral teaching and moral conduct from the rock of faith, and to build them on the unstable sands of human norms, sooner or later leads the individual and the community to moral destruction. The fool, who hath said in his heart, there is no God, will walk the ways of corruption.[29] The number of such fools, who today attempt to separate morality and religion, has become legion. They do not or will not see that by expelling con-

[28] I John, 3, 1.
[29] Ps., 13, 1.

fessional, i.e. clear and definite, Christianity from instruction and education, from the formation of social and public life, they are treading the ways of spiritual impoverishment and decline. No coercive power of the State, no mere earthly ideals, though they be high and noble in themselves, will be able in the long run to replace the final and decisive motives that come from belief in God and Christ. Take the moral support of the eternal and divine, of comforting and consoling belief in the Rewarder of all good and the Punisher of all evil, from those who are called on to make the greatest sacrifices, to surrender their petty self to the common weal, the result will be in countless instances not the acceptance, but the shirking, of duty. The conscientious observance of the ten commandments of God and the commandments of the Church—the latter are only the practical applications of the principles of the Gospel—is for every individual an incomparable schooling of systematic self-discipline, moral training and character formation—a schooling that demands much, but not too much. The God of kindness, Who as lawgiver says: "Thou shalt," gives in His grace also the power to do. To disregard such profound and efficacious factors in moral training, or knowingly to bar their way to the field of popular education, is inexcusable cooperation in the religious undernourishment of the community. To hand over moral teaching to subjective human opinions that change with the trend of the time, instead of anchoring it to the holy will of the Eternal God and to His commandments, is to open wide the door to the forces of destruction. Thus to have ushered in

the betrayal of the eternal principles of an objective morality for the schooling of conscience, for the ennoblement of every sphere and branch of life, is a sin against the future of the people, whose bitter fruits the coming generations will taste.

Recognition of the Natural Law

35. It is part of the trend of the day to sever more and more not only morality but also the foundation of law and jurisprudence, from true belief in God and from His revealed commandments. Here We have in mind particularly the so-called natural law that is written by the finger of the Creator Himself in the tables of the hearts of men [30] and which can be read on these tables by sound reason not darkened by sin and passion. Every positive law, from whatever lawgiver it may come, can be examined as to its moral implications, and consequently as to its moral authority to bind in conscience, in the light of the commandments of the natural law. The laws of man that are in direct contradiction with the natural law bear an initial defect that no violent means, no outward display of power can remedy. By this standard must we judge the principle: "What helps the people is right." A right meaning may be given to this sentence if understood as expressing that what is morally illicit can never serve the true interests of the people. But even ancient paganism recognized that the sentence, to be perfectly accurate, should be inverted and read: "Never is anything useful, if it is not at the same time morally

[30] Cf. Rom., 2, 15.

good. And not because it is useful, is it morally good, but because it is morally good, it is also useful." [31] Cut loose from this rule of morality, that principle would mean, in international life, a perpetual state of war between the different nations. In political life within the State, since it confuses considerations of utility with those of right, it mistakes the basic fact that man as a person possesses God-given rights, which must be preserved from all attacks aimed at denying, suppressing or disregarding them. To pay no heed to this truth is to overlook the fact that the true public good is finally determined and recognized by the nature of man, with his harmonious coordination of personal rights and social obligations, as well as by the purpose of the community which in turn is conditioned by the same human nature. The community is willed by the Creator as the means to the full development of the individual and social attainments, which the individual in give and take has to employ to his own good and that of others. Also those higher and more comprehensive values, that cannot be realized by the individual but only by the community, in the final analysis are intended by the Creator for the sake of the individual, for his natural and supernatural development and perfection. A deviation from this order loosens the supports on which the community is placed, and thereby imperils the tranquillity, security and even the existence of the community itself.

36. The believer has an inalienable right to profess his faith and put it into practice in the manner

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[31] Cicero, De officiis, 3, 30.

suited to him. Laws that suppress or make this profession and practice difficult contradict the natural law.

37. Conscientious parents, aware of their duty in the matter of education, have a primary and original right to determine the education of the children given to them by God in the spirit of the true faith and in agreement with its principles and ordinances. Laws or other regulations concerning schools that disregard the rights of parents guaranteed to them by the natural law, or by threat and violence nullify those rights, contradict the natural law and are utterly and essentially immoral.

38. The Church, the guardian and exponent of the divine natural law, cannot do otherwise than declare that the registrations which have just taken place in circumstances of notorious coercion are the result of violence and void of all legality.

To Youth

39. As the vice regent of Him who said to the young man of the gospel: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," [32] do We especially address fatherly words to youth. By a thousand tongues today a gospel is preached in your ears that is not revealed by your Heavenly Father. A thousand pens write in the service of a sham Christianity that is not the Christianity of Christ. Day by day the press and the radio overwhelm you with productions hostile to your faith and Church and, with no consideration or reverence, attack what must be to you sacred and holy.

[32] Matthew, 19, 17.

40. We know that many, very many, of you for the sake of loyalty to your religion and Church, for the sake of belonging to Church associations guaranteed by the Concordat, have borne and still endure bitter days of misunderstanding, of suspicion, of contempt, of denial of your patriotism, of manifold injury in your professional and social life. We are aware that many an unknown soldier of Christ stands in your ranks, who with heavy heart but head erect bears his lot and finds comfort solely in the thought of suffering reproach for the Name of Jesus.[33]

41. Today, when new perils and conflicts threaten, We say to this youth: "If anyone preach to you a gospel, besides that which you have received" at the knees of a pious mother, from the lips of a Catholic father, from the education of a teacher true to his God and his church, "let him be anathema." [34] If the State founds a State-Youth to which all are obliged to belong, then it is—without prejudice to the rights of Church associations—an obvious, an inalienable right of the young men themselves, and of their parents responsible for them before God, to demand that this obligatory organization should be cleansed of all manifestations of a spirit hostile to Christianity and the Church, which, up to the recent past and even at the present moment, place Catholic parents in hopeless conflicts of conscience, since they cannot give to the State what is demanded in the name of

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[33] Acts, 5, 41.

[34] Gal., 1, 9.

the State without robbing God of what belongs to God.

42. No one has any intention of obstructing the youth of Germany on the road that is meant to bring them to the realization of true popular union, to the fostering of the love of freedom, to steadfast loyalty to the fatherland. What We object to, and what We must object to, is the intentional and systematically fomented opposition which is set up between these educational purposes and those of religion. Therefore we call out to youth: Sing your songs of freedom, but do not forget the freedom of the sons of God while singing them. Do not allow this noble freedom, for which there is no substitute, to pine away in the slave chains of sin and sensuality. He who sings the song of loyalty to his earthly country must not, in disloyalty to God, to his church, to his eternal country, become a deserter and a traitor. You are told a great deal about heroic greatness, in designed and false contrast to the humility and patience of the Gospel. Why is silence kept about the heroism of moral struggle? Why is it not told you that the preservation of baptismal innocence represents an heroic action which should be assured of the appreciation it deserves in the religious and moral sphere? A great deal is told you of human weaknesses in the history of the Church. Why is nothing said of the great deeds that accompany her on her way through the centuries, of the Saints she has produced, of the blessings which came from the living union between this Church and your people and enriched the culture of the west? You are told a great deal of the exercises of sport. Un-

dertaken with discretion, the cult of physical fitness is a benefit for youth. But now so much time is devoted to it, in many cases, that no account is taken of the harmonious development of mind and body, of what is due to family life, of the commandment to keep holy the Lord's day. With a disregard bordering on indifference, the sacredness and peace that are in the best tradition of the German Sunday are taken from it. With confidence We expect from practicing Catholic youth that, in the difficult circumstances of obligatory State organization, they will insist unflinchingly on their right to keep Sunday in a Christian manner, that in the cult of physical fitness they will not forget the interests of their immortal souls; that they will not allow themselves to be overcome by evil, but will strive to overcome evil by good;[35] that their highest and holiest ambition will be so to run the race towards immortal life as to achieve the crown of victory.[36]

To Priests and Religious

43. We address a special word of recognition, encouragement and exhortation to the priests of Germany, on whom, in subordination to their Bishops, there rests the task of showing the flock of Christ in a trying time and under difficult circumstances, the right paths, by precept and example, by daily sacrifice and apostolic patience. Be not weary, beloved sons and sharers in the holy mysteries, in following the eternal High Priest, Jesus Christ, Who

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[35] Rom., 12, 21.
[36] Cf. I Cor., 9, 24.

bestows love and care like the good Samaritan. Keep yourselves day by day in conduct undefiled before God, in unremitting discipline and perfection, in merciful care for all entrusted to you, especially for those endangered, the weak and the wavering. Be the leaders of the faithful, the support of the stumbling, the teachers of the doubtful, the consolers of those who mourn, the unselfish helpers and counsellors of all. The trials and sorrows through which your people have passed since the war have left their mark on its soul. They have left behind conflicts and bitterness that can be healed only slowly, that can be overcome only in the spirit of unselfish and active charity. This charity, which is the indispensable armor of the apostle, especially in the world of the present day stirred up and distorted with hate, We pray and beg the Lord to bestow on you in superabundant measure. This apostolic love will make you, if not forget, at least forgive the many undeserved offenses that more plentifully than ever before are strewn in the path of your priestly ministration. This comprehending and merciful charity towards the erring, and even towards the contemptuous, does not mean and cannot mean, that you renounce in any way the proclaiming of, the insisting on, and the courageous defense of the truth and its free and unhindered application to the realities about you. The first and obvious duty the priest owes to the world about him is service to the truth, the whole truth, the unmasking and refutation of error in whatever form or disguise it conceals itself.

44. To Catholic religious of both sexes We like-

wise express Our fatherly thanks, together with our utmost sympathy in the fate that, in consequence of regulations against the religious Orders, has taken them out of the work of their chosen career, which they had loved and made rich in blessing. If individuals have fallen short and proved themselves unworthy, their misdeeds, punished by the Church herself, do not lessen the merits of the overwhelming majority, who, in unselfishness and voluntary poverty, were striving to serve their God and people in the spirit of sacrifice. The zeal, fidelity, striving after virtue, active charity and readiness to help on the part of the Orders engaged in the ministry, hospitals and schools are, and remain, a praiseworthy contribution to private and public prosperity, to which undoubtedly a later and quieter time will accord more justice than the troubled present. We feel confident that Superiors of religious communities will take occasion from their trials and difficulties to call down from the Almighty fresh blessing and fruitfulness on their heavy work through redoubled zeal, deepened life of prayer, holy earnestness in their vocation and religious discipline.

TO THE FAITHFUL OF THE LAITY

45. Before our eyes stands the countless throng of faithful sons and daughters, for whom the suffering of the Church in Germany and their own suffering has in no way diminished their devotion to the cause of God, their tender love for the Father of Christendom, their obedience to their Bishops and priests, their cheerful readiness, come what may, to remain true in the future to what

they have believed and have received from their forefathers as a sacred inheritance. From a heart that is deeply moved We send them all our paternal greeting.

46. And this, first and foremost, to the members of the Church associations, who courageously and oftentimes at the cost of painful sacrifice have kept true to Christ and did not give up the rights which a formal agreement, made in good faith and trust, had guaranteed to the Church and themselves.

47. We address a particularly heartfelt greeting to Catholic parents. Their God-given rights and duties in education are this present moment at the very center of a struggle which could not conceivably be fraught with graver consequences for the future. The Church of Christ cannot wait until her altars have been overthrown, until sacrilegious hands have set the houses of God on fire, before she begins to mourn and lament. When the attempt is made to desecrate the tabernacle of a child's soul sanctified in baptism by an education that is hostile to Christ; when from this living temple of God the eternal lamp of belief in Christ is cast out and in its place is brought the false light of a substitute faith that has nothing in common with the faith of the Cross, then the time of spiritual profanation of the temple is at hand, then it is the duty of every professing Christian to separate clearly his responsibility from that of the other side, to keep his conscience clear of any culpable cooperation in such dreadful work and corruption. The more the opponents are at pains to deny and gloss over their dark intentions, all the more is vigilant distrust called for, and distrustful vigilance

that has been aroused by bitter experience. The formal maintaining of religious instruction, especially when controlled and shackled by those who are not competent, in the framework of a school that in other departments systematically and invidiously works against the same religion, can never be a justification for a believing Christian to give his free approval to such a school that aims at destroying religion. We know, beloved Catholic parents, that there can be no question of such willingness on your part. We know that a free and secret ballot would in your case be equivalent to an overwhelming vote for the religious school. And therefore We shall not weary in the future of representing to responsible parties the injustice of the coercive measures so far adopted, and the obligation of allowing free expression of a free will. Meanwhile do not forget this: from the bond of responsibility established by God that binds you to your children, no earthly power can loose you. No one of those who today are oppressing you in the exercise of your rights in education and pretend to free you from your duty in this matter, will be able to answer for you to the Eternal Judge when He asks you the question: "Where are those I have given you?" May everyone of you be able to answer: "Of them thou hast given me, I have not lost anyone." [37]

48. Venerable Brethren, We are certain that the words which We address to you, and through you to the Catholics of the German Reich, in this de-

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[37] John, 18, 9.

cisive hour, will awaken in the hearts and actions of Our loyal children the echo that answers to the loving solicitude of the Common Father. If there is anything that We beseech of the Lord with particular fervor, it is this, that Our words may also reach the ears and hearts of those who have already begun to allow themselves to be inveigled by the enticements and threats of those who take their stand against Christ and His holy Gospel and cause them to reflect.

49. Every word of this letter has been weighed in the scales of truth and of charity. We did not desire to share any accountability, by reason of untimely silence, for a want of enlightenment, nor, by needless severity, for the hardening of heart of any one of those who are placed under Our pastoral responsibility and are no less included in Our pastoral charity because at the moment they are walking estranged in the ways of error. Though many of those who adapt themselves to the ways of their new environment, who have for their deserted Father's house and for the Father Himself only words of disloyalty, ingratitude or even insult; though they forget what they have cast behind them, the day will dawn when the horror of being in spiritual dereliction far from God will strike the hearts of these prodigal sons, when homesickness will drive them back to the "God who rejoiced their youth" and to the Church whose maternal hand pointed out for them the way to the Heavenly Father. To hasten this hour is the object of Our unceasing prayers.

50. Just as other times of the Church, so will this be the harbinger of new advance and inward

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ATHEISTIC COMMUNISM

Encyclical Letter

(Divini Redemptoris)

of

His Holiness, Pope Pius XI

(Vatican Press Translation)

Issued March 19, 1937

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on

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Encyclical Letter

(*Divini Redemptoris*)

TO THE PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS AND OTHER ORDINARIES IN PEACE AND COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE.

On Atheistic Communism

POPE PIUS XI

VENERABLE BRETHREN,
HEALTH AND APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION:

THE promise of a Redeemer brightens the first page of the history of mankind, and the confident hope aroused by this promise softened the keen regret for a paradise which had been lost. It was this hope that accompanied the human race on its weary journey, until in the fullness of time the expected Saviour came to begin a new universal civilization, the Christian civilization, far superior even to that which up to this time had been laboriously achieved by certain more privileged nations.

2. Nevertheless, the struggle between good and evil remained in the world as a sad legacy of the original fall. Nor has the ancient tempter ever ceased to deceive mankind with false promises. It is on this account that one convulsion following upon another has marked the passage of the centuries, down to the revolution of our own days. This modern revolution, it may be said, has actually broken out or threatens everywhere, and it exceeds in amplitude and violence anything yet experienced in the preceding persecutions launched against the

Church. Entire peoples find themselves in danger of falling back into a barbarism worse than that which oppressed the greater part of the world at the coming of the Redeemer.

3. This all too imminent danger, Venerable Brethren, as you have already surmised, is bolshevistic and atheistic Communism, which aims at upsetting the social order and at undermining the very foundations of Christian civilization.

I

ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH TOWARDS COMMUNISM

Previous Condemnations

4. In the face of such a threat, the Catholic Church could not and does not remain silent. This Apostolic See, above all, has not refrained from raising its voice, for it knows that its proper and social mission is to defend truth, justice and all those eternal values which Communism ignores or attacks. Ever since the days when groups of "intellectuals" were formed in an arrogant attempt to free civilization from the bonds of morality and religion, Our Predecessors overtly and explicitly drew the attention of the world to the consequences of the de-Christianization of human society. With reference to Communism, Our Venerable Predecessor, Pius IX, of holy memory, as early as 1846 pronounced a solemn condemnation, which he confirmed in the words of the Syllabus directed against "that infamous doctrine of so-called Communism which is absolutely contrary to the natural law itself, and if once adopted would utterly destroy the rights, property and possessions of all men, and even society itself." [1] Later on, another of Our Predecessors, the immortal Leo XIII, in his Encyclical *Quod Apostolici Muneris*, defined Communism as "the fatal plague which insinuates itself into the very marrow of human society only to

[1] Encycl. *Qui Pluribus*, Nov. 9, 1846 (*Acta Pii IX*, Vol. I, p. 13). Cf. *Syllabus*, IV, (A. A. S., vol. III, p. 170)

bring about its ruin." [2] With clear intuition he pointed out that the atheistic movements existing among the masses of the Machine Age had their origin in that school of philosophy which for centuries had sought to divorce science from the life of the Faith and of the Church.

ACTS OF PRESENT PONTIFICATE

5. During Our Pontificate We too have frequently and with urgent insistence denounced the current trend to atheism which is alarmingly on the increase. In 1924 when Our relief-mission returned from the Soviet Union We condemned Communism in a special Allocution[3] which We addressed to the whole world. In our Encyclicals *Miserentissimus Redemptor,*[4] *Quadragesimo Anno,*[5] *Caritate Christi,*[6] *Acerba Animi,*[7] *Dilectissima Nobis,*[8] We raised a solemn protest against the persecutions unleashed in Russia, in Mexico and now in Spain. Our two Allocutions of last year, the first on the occasion of the opening of the International Catholic Press Exposition, and the second during Our audience to the Spanish refugees, along with Our message of last Christmas, have evoked a world-wide echo which is not yet spent. In fact, the most persistent enemies of the Church, who from Moscow are directing the struggle against

[2] Encycl. *Quod Apostolici Muneris,* Dec. 28, 1878 (*Acta Leonis XIII,* Vol. 1, p. 46).

[3] Dec. 18, 1924: A. A. S., Vol. XVI (1924), pp. 494, 495.

[4] May 8, 1928: A. A. S., Vol. XX (1928), pp. 165-178.

[5] May 15, 1931: A. A. S., Vol. XXIII (1931), pp. 177-228.

[6] May 3, 1932: A. A. S., Vol. XXIV (1932), pp. 177-194.

[7] Sept. 29, 1932: A. A. S., Vol. XXIV (1932), pp. 321-332.

[8] June 3, 1933: A. A. S., Vol. XXV (1933), pp. 261-274.

Christian civilization, themselves bear witness, by their unceasing attacks in word and act, that even to this hour the Papacy has continued faithfully to protect the sanctuary of the Christian religion, and that it has called public attention to the perils of Communism more frequently and more effectively than any other public authority on earth.

Need of Another Solemn Pronouncement

6. To Our great satisfaction, Venerable Brethren, you have, by means of individual and even joint pastoral Letters, accurately transmitted and explained to the Faithful these admonitions. Yet despite Our frequent and paternal warning the peril only grows greater from day to day because of the pressure exerted by clever agitators. Therefore We believe it to be Our duty to raise Our voice once more, in a still more solemn missive, in accord with the tradition of this Apostolic See, the Teacher of Truth, and in accord with the desire of the whole Catholic world, which makes the appearance of such a document but natural. We trust that the echo of Our voice will reach every mind free from prejudice and every heart sincerely desirous of the good of mankind. We wish this the more because Our words are now receiving sorry confirmation from the spectacle of the bitter fruits of subversive ideas, which We foresaw and foretold, and which are in fact multiplying fearfully in the countries already stricken, or threatening every other country of the world.

7. Hence We wish to expose once more in a brief synthesis the principles of atheistic Communism as they are manifested chiefly in bolshevism. We

wish also to indicate its method of action and to contrast with its false principles the clear doctrine of the Church, in order to inculcate anew and with greater insistence the means by which the Christian civilization, the true *civitas humana*, can be saved from the satanic scourge, and not merely saved, but better developed for the well-being of human society.

II

COMMUNISM IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Doctrine

False Ideal

8. The Communism of today, more emphatically than similar movements in the past, conceals in itself a false messianic idea. A psuedo-ideal of justice, of equality and fraternity in labor impregnates all its doctrine and activity with a deceptive mysticism, which communicates a zealous and contagious enthusiasm to the multitudes entrapped by delusive promises. This is especially true in an age like ours, when unusual misery has resulted from the unequal distribution of the goods of this world. This pseudo-ideal is even boastfully advanced as if it were responsible for a certain economic progress. As a matter of fact, when such progress is at all real, its true causes are quite different, as for instance the intensification of industrialism in countries which were formerly almost without it, the exploitation of immense natural resources, and the use of the most brutal methods to insure the achievement of gigantic projects with a minimum of expense.

Marxist Evolutionary Materialism

9. The doctrine of modern Communism, which is often concealed under the most seductive trappings, is in substance based on the principles of dialectical and historical materialism previously advocated by Marx, of which the theoricians of

bolshevism claim to possess the only genuine interpretation. According to this doctrine there is in the world only one reality, matter, the blind forces of which evolve into plant, animal and man. Even human society is nothing but a phenomenon and form of matter, evolving in the same way. By a law of inexorable necessity and through a perpetual conflict of forces, matter moves towards the final synthesis of a classless society. In such a doctrine, as is evident, there is no room for the idea of God; there is no difference between matter and spirit, between soul and body; there is neither survival of the soul after death nor any hope in a future life. Insisting on the dialectical aspect of their materialism, the Communists claim that the conflict which carries the world towards its final synthesis can be accelerated by man. Hence they endeavor to sharpen the antagonisms which arise between the various classes of society. Thus the class-struggle with its consequent violent hate and destruction takes on the aspects of a crusade for the progress of humanity. On the other hand, all other forces whatever, as long as they resist such systematic violence, must be annihilated as hostile to the human race.

Man and the Family Under Communism

10. Communism, moreover, strips man of his liberty, robs human personality of all its dignity, and removes all the moral restraints that check the eruptions of blind impulse. There is no recognition of any right of the individual in his relations to the collectivity; no natural right is accorded to human personality, which is a mere cog-wheel in the Communist system. In man's relations with

other individuals, besides, Communists hold the principle of absolute equality, rejecting all hierarchy and divinely-constituted authority, including the authority of parents. What men call authority and subordination is derived from the community as its first and only font. Nor is the individual granted any property rights over material goods or the means of production, for inasmuch as these are the source of further wealth, their possession would give one man power over another. Precisely on this score, all forms of private property must be eradicated, for they are at the origin of all economic enslavement.

11. Refusing to human life any sacred or spiritual character, such a doctrine logically makes of marriage and the family a purely artificial and civil institution, the outcome of a specific economic system. There exists no matrimonial bond of a juridico-moral nature that is not subject to the whim of the individual or of the collectivity. Naturally, therefore, the notion of an indissoluble marriage-tie is scouted. Communism is particularly characterized by the rejection of any link that binds woman to the family and the home, and her emancipation is proclaimed as a basic principle. She is withdrawn from the family and the care of her children, to be thrust instead into public life and collective production under the same conditions as man. The care of home and children then devolves upon the collectivity. Finally, the right of education is denied to parents, for it is conceived as the exclusive prerogative of the community, in whose name and by whose mandate alone parents may exercise this right.

Communist Society

12. What would be the condition of a human society based on such materialistic tenets? It would be a collectivity with no other hierarchy than that of the economic system. It would have only one mission: the production of material things by means of collective labor, so that the goods of this world might be enjoyed in a paradise where each would "give according to his powers" and would "receive according to his needs." Communism recognizes in the collectivity the right, or rather, unlimited discretion, to draft individuals for the labor of the collectivity with no regard for their personal welfare; so that even violence could be legitimately exercised to dragoon the recalcitrant against their wills. In the Communistic commonwealth morality and law would be nothing but a derivation of the existing economic order, purely earthly in origin and unstable in character. In a word, the Communists claim to inaugurate a new era and a new civilization which is the result of blind evolutionary forces culminating in a humanity without God.

13. When all men have finally acquired the collectivist mentality in this Utopia of a really classless society, the political State, which is now conceived by Communists merely as the instrument by which the proletariat is oppressed by the capitalists, will have lost all reason for its existence and will "wither away." However, until that happy consummation is realized, the State and the powers of the State furnish Communism with the most efficacious and most extensive means for the achievement of its goal.

14. Such, Venerable Brethren, is the new gospel which bolshevistic and atheistic Communism offers the world as the glad tidings of deliverance and salvation! It is a system full of errors and sophisms. It is in opposition both to reason and to Divine Revelation. It subverts the social order, because it means the destruction of its foundations; because it ignores the true origin and purpose of the State; because it denies the rights, dignity and liberty of human personality.

SPREAD OF COMMUNISM EXPLAINED

Alluring Promises

15. How is it possible that such a system, long since rejected scientifically and now proved erroneous by experience, how is it, We ask, that such a system could spread so rapidly in all parts of the world? The explanation lies in the fact that too few have been able to grasp the nature of Communism. The majority instead succumb to its deception, skilfully concealed by the most extravagant promises. By pretending to desire only the betterment of the condition of the working classes, by urging the removal of the very real abuses chargeable to the liberalistic economic order, and by demanding a more equitable distribution of this world's goods (objectives entirely and undoubtedly legitimate), the Communist takes advantage of the present world-wide economic crisis to draw into the sphere of his influence even those sections of the populace which on principle reject all forms of materialism and terrorism. And as every error contains its element of truth, the partial truths to which We have referred are astutely presented ac-

cording to the needs of time and place, to conceal, when convenient, the repulsive crudity and inhumanity of Communistic principles and tactics. Thus the Communist ideal wins over many of the better-minded members of the community. These in turn become the apostles of the movement among the younger intelligentsia who are still too immature to recognize the intrinsic errors of the system. The preachers of Communism are also proficient in exploiting racial antagonisms and political divisions and oppositions. They take advantage of the lack of orientation characteristic of modern agnostic science in order to burrow into the universities, where they bolster up the principles of their doctrine with pseudo-scientific arguments.

Liberalism Prepares the Way

16. If we would explain the blind acceptance of Communism by so many thousands of workmen, we must remember that the way had been already prepared for it by the religious and moral destitution in which wage-earners had been left by liberal economics. Even on Sundays and holy days, labor-shifts were given no time to attend to their essential religious duties. No one thought of building churches within convenient distance of factories, nor of facilitating the work of the priest. On the contrary, laicism was actively and persistently promoted, with the result that we are now reaping the fruits of the errors so often denounced by Our Predecessors and by Ourselves. It can surprise no one that the Communistic fallacy should be spreading in a world already to a large extent de-Christianized.

Shrewd and Widespread Propaganda

17. There is another explanation for the rapid diffusion of the Communistic ideas now seeping into every nation, great and small, advanced and backward, so that no corner of the earth is free from them. This explanation is to be found in a propaganda so truly diabolical that the world has perhaps never witnessed its like before. It is directed from one common center. It is shrewdly adapted to the varying conditions of diverse peoples. It has at its disposal great financial resources, gigantic organizations, international congresses, and countless trained workers. It makes use of pamphlets and reviews, of cinema, theater and radio, of schools and even universities. Little by little it penetrates into all classes of the people and even reaches the better-minded groups of the community, with the result that few are aware of the poison which increasingly pervades their minds and hearts.

Silence of the Press

18. A third powerful factor in the diffusion of Communism is the conspiracy of silence on the part of a large section of the non-Catholic press of the world. We say conspiracy, because it is impossible otherwise to explain how a press usually so eager to exploit even the little daily incidents of life has been able to remain silent for so long about the horrors perpetrated in Russia, in Mexico and even in a great part of Spain; and that it should have relatively so little to say concerning a world organization as vast as Russian Communism. This silence is due in part to short-sighted political policy, and is favored by various occult forces which for a

long time have been working for the overthrow of the Christian Social Order.

SAD CONSEQUENCES

Russia and Mexico

19. Meanwhile the sorry effects of this propaganda are before our eyes. Where Communism has been able to assert its power—and here We are thinking with special affection of the people of Russia and Mexico—it has striven by every possible means, as its champions openly boast, to destroy Christian civilization and the Christian religion by banishing every remembrance of them from the hearts of men, especially of the young. Bishops and priests were exiled, condemned to forced labor, shot and done to death in inhuman fashion; laymen suspected of defending their religion were vexed, persecuted, dragged off to trial and thrown into prison.

Horrors of Communism in Spain

20. Even where the scourge of Communism has not yet had time enough to exercise to the full its logical effect, as witness Our beloved Spain, it has, alas, found compensation in the fiercer violence of its attack. Not only this or that church or isolated monastery was sacked, but as far as possible every church and every monastery was destroyed. Every vestige of the Christian religion was eradicated, even though intimately linked with the rarest monuments of art and science. The fury of Communism has not confined itself to the indiscriminate slaughter of Bishops, of thousands of priests and religious of both sexes; it searches out above all

those who have been devoting their lives to the welfare of the working classes and the poor. But the majority of its victims have been laymen of all conditions and classes. Even up to the present moment, masses of them are slain almost daily for no other offense than the fact that they are good Christians or at least opposed to atheistic Communism. And this fearful destruction has been carried out with a hatred and a savage barbarity one would not have believed possible in our age. No man of good sense, nor any statesman conscious of his responsibility can fail to shudder at the thought that what is happening today in Spain may perhaps be repeated tomorrow in other civilized countries.

Logical Result of System

21. Nor can it be said that these atrocities are a transitory phenomenon, the usual accompaniment of all great revolutions, the isolated excesses common to every war. No, they are the natural fruit of a system which lacks all innner restraint. Some restraint is necessary for man considered either as an individual or in society. Even the barbaric peoples had this inner check in the natural law written by God in the heart of every man. And where this natural law was held in higher esteem, ancient nations rose to a grandeur that still fascinates—more than it should—certain superficial students of human history. But tear the very idea of God from the hearts of men, and they are necessarily urged by their passions to the most atrocious barbarity.

Struggle Against All That Is Divine

22. This, unfortunately, is what we now behold. For the first time in history we are witnessing a struggle, cold-blooded in purpose and mapped out to the least detail, between man and "all that is called God." [9] Communism is by its nature anti-religious. It considers religion as "the opiate of the people" because the principles of religion which speak of a life beyond the grave dissuade the proletariat from the dream of a Soviet paradise which is of this world.

Terrorism

23. But the law of nature and its Author cannot be flouted with impunity. Communism has not been able, and will not be able, to achieve its objectives even in the merely economic sphere. It is true that in Russia it has been a contributing factor in rousing men and materials from the inertia of centuries, and in obtaining by all manner of means, often without scruple, some measure of material success. Nevertheless We know from reliable and even very recent testimony that not even there, in spite of slavery imposed on millions of men, has Communism reached its promised goal. After all, even the sphere of economics needs some morality, some moral sense of responsibility, which can find no place in a system so thoroughly materialistic as Communism. Terrorism is the only possible substitute, and it is terrorism that reigns today in Russia, where former comrades in revolution are exterminating each other. Terrorism, having failed despite all to stem the tide of moral corruption,

[9] Cf. *Thessalonians*, II, 4.

cannot even prevent the dissolution of society itself.

Fatherly Concern for Oppressed Russians

24. In making these observations it is no part of Our intention to condemn *en masse* the peoples of the Soviet Union. For them We cherish the warmest paternal affection. We are well aware that not a few of them groan beneath the yoke imposed on them by men who in very large part are strangers to the real interests of the country. We recognize that many others were deceived by fallacious hopes. We blame only the system, with its authors and abettors who considered Russia the best-prepared field for experimenting with a plan elaborated decades ago, and who from there continue to spread it from one end of the world to the other.

III

DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH IN CONTRAST

25. We have exposed the errors and the violent, deceptive tactics of bolshevistic and atheistic Communism. It is now time, Venerable Brethren, to contrast with it the true notion, already familiar to you, of the *civitas humana* or human society, as taught by reason and Revelation through the mouth of the Church, *Magistra Gentium.*

God the Supreme Reality

26. Above all other reality there exists one supreme Being: God, the omnipotent Creator of all things, the all-wise and just Judge of all men. This supreme reality, God, is the absolute condemnation of the impudent falsehoods of Communism. In truth, it is not because men believe in God that He exists; rather because He exists do all men whose eyes are not deliberately closed to the truth believe in Him and pray to Him.

Man and Family According to Reason and Faith

27. In the Encyclical on Christian Education[10] We explained the fundamental doctrine concerning man as it may be gathered from reason and Faith. Man has a spiritual and immortal soul. He is a person, marvelously endowed by his Creator

[10] Encycl. *Divini Illius Magistri*, Dec. 31, 1929 (A. A. S., Vol. XXII, 1930, pp. 49-86).

with gifts of body and mind. He is a true "microcosm," as the ancients said, a world in miniature, with a value far surpassing that of the vast inanimate cosmos. God alone is his last end, in this life and the next. By sanctifying grace he is raised to the dignity of a son of God, and incorporated into the Kingdom of God in the Mystical Body of Christ. In consequence he has been endowed by God with many and varied prerogatives: the right to life, to bodily integrity, to the necessary means of existence; the right to tend toward his ultimate goal in the path marked out for him by God; the right of association and the right to possess and use property.

28. Just as matrimony and the right to its natural use are of divine origin, so likewise are the constitution and fundamental prerogatives of the family fixed and determined by the Creator. In the Encyclical on Christian Marriage[11] and in Our other Encyclical on Education, cited above, we have treated these topics at considerable length.

NATURE OF SOCIETY

Mutual Rights and Duties

29. But God has likewise destined man for civil society according to the dictates of his very nature. In the plan of the Creator, society is a natural means which man can and must use to reach his destined end. Society is for man and not vice versa. This must not be understood in the sense of liberalistic individualism, which subordinates society to the selfish use of the individual; but only in the

[11] Encycl. *Casti Connubii*, Dec. 31, 1930 (A. A. S., Vol. XXII, 1930, pp. 539-592).

sense that by means of an organic union with society and by mutual collaboration the attainment of earthly happiness is placed within the reach of all. In a further sense, it is society which affords the opportunities for the development of all the individual and social gifts bestowed on human nature. These natural gifts have a value surpassing the immediate interests of the moment, for in society they reflect the divine perfection, which would not be true were man to live alone. But on final analysis, even in this latter function, society is made for man, that he may recognize this reflection of God's perfection, and refer it in praise and adoration to the Creator. Only man, the human person, and not society in any form is endowed with reason and a morally free will.

30. Man cannot be exempted from his divinely-imposed obligations toward civil society, and the representatives of authority have the right to coerce him when he refuses without reason to do his duty. Society, on the other hand, cannot defraud man of his God-granted rights, the most important of which We have indicated above. Nor can society systematically void these rights by making their use impossible. It is therefore according to the dictates of reason that ultimately all material things should be ordained to man as a person, that through his mediation they may find their way to the Creator. In this wise we can apply to man, the human person, the words of the Apostle of the Gentiles, who writes to the Corinthians on the Christian economy of salvation: "All things are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's." [13]

[13] *I Corinthians*, III, 21.

While Communism impoverishes human personality by inverting the terms of the relation of man to society, to what lofty heights is man not elevated by reason and Revelation!

Social-Economic Order

31. The directive principles concerning the social-economic order have been expounded in the social Encyclical of Leo XIII on the question of labor.[13] Our own Encyclical on the Reconstruction of the Social Order[14] adapted these principles to present needs. Then, insisting anew on the age-old doctrine of the Church concerning the individual and social character of private property, We explained clearly the right and dignity of labor, the relations of mutual aid and collaboration which should exist between those who possess capital and those who work, the salary due in strict justice to the worker for himself and for his family.

32. In this same Encyclical of Ours We have shown that the means of saving the world of today from the lamentable ruin into which a moral liberalism has plunged us, are neither the class-struggle nor terror, nor yet the autocratic abuse of State power, but rather the infusion of social justice and the sentiment of Christian love into the social-economic order. We have indicated how a sound prosperity is to be restored according to the true principles of a sane corporative system which respects the proper hierarchic structure of society; and how all the occupational groups should be

[13] Encycl. *Rerum Novarum*, May 15, 1891 (*Acta Leonis XIII*, Vol. IV, pp. 177-209).

[14] Encycl. *Quadragesimo Anno*, May 15, 1931 (A. A. S., Vol. XXIII, 1931, pp. 177-228).

CORRECTION: In line 3, paragr
32 of the above, the words "a mo
should read "amoral".

fused into a harmonious unity inspired by the principle of the common good. And the genuine and chief function of public and civil authority consists precisely in the efficacious furthering of this harmony and coordination of all social forces.

Social Hierarchy and State Prerogatives

33. In view of this organized common effort towards peaceful living, Catholic doctrine vindicates to the State the dignity and authority of a vigilant and provident defender of those divine and human rights on which the Sacred Scriptures and the Fathers of the Church insist so often. It is not true that all have equal rights in civil society. It is not true that there exists no lawful social hierarchy. Let it suffice to refer to the Encyclicals of Leo XIII already cited, especially to that on State powers,[15] and to the other on the Christian Constitution of States.[16] In these documents the Catholic will find the principles of reason and the Faith clearly explained, and these principles will enable him to defend himself against the errors and perils of a Communistic conception of the State. The enslavement of man despoiled of his rights, the denial of the transcendental origin of the State and its authority, the horrible abuse of public power in the service of a collectivistic terrorism, are the very contrary of all that corresponds with natural ethics and the will of the Creator. Both man and civil society derive their origin from the Creator, Who has mutually ordained them one

[15] Encycl. *Diuturnum Illud*, June 20, 1881 (*Acta Leonis XIII*, Vol. I, pp. 210-222).

[16] Encycl. *Immortale Dei*, Nov. 1, 1885 (*Acta Leonis XIII*, Vol. II, pp. 146-168).

to the other. Hence neither can be exempted from their correlative obligations, nor deny or diminish each other's rights. The Creator Himself has regulated this mutual relationship in its fundamental lines, and it is by an unjust usurpation that Communism arrogates to itself the right to enforce, in place of the divine law based on the immutable principles of truth and charity, a partisan political program which derives from the arbitrary human will and is replete with hate.

BEAUTY OF CHURCH DOCTRINE

34. In teaching this enlightening doctrine the Church has no other intention than to realize the glad tidings sung by the Angels above the cave of Bethlehem at the Redeemer's birth: "Glory to God . . . and . . . peace to men . . . ,"[17] true peace and true happiness, even here below as far as is possible, in preparation for the happiness of heaven—but to men of good will. This doctrine is equally removed from all extremes of error and all exaggerations of parties or systems which stem from error. It maintains a constant equilibrium of truth and justice, which it vindicates in theory and applies and promotes in practice, bringing into harmony the rights and duties of all parties. Thus authority is reconciled with liberty, the dignity of the individual with that of the State, the human personality of the subject with the divine delegation of the superior; and in this way a balance is struck between the due dependence and well-ordered love of a man for himself, his family and country, and his love

[17] ST. LUKE, II, 14.

of other families and other peoples, founded on the love of God, the Father of all, their first principle and last end. The Church does not separate a proper regard for temporal welfare from solicitude for the eternal. If she subordinates the former to the latter according to the words of her divine Founder, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you,"[18] she is nevertheless so far from being unconcerned with human affairs, so far from hindering civil progress and material advancement, that she actually fosters and promotes them in the most sensible and efficacious manner. Thus even in the sphere of social-economics, although the Church has never proposed a definite technical system, since this is not her field, she has nevertheless clearly outlined the guiding principles which, while susceptible of varied concrete applications according to the diversified conditions of times and places and peoples, indicate the safe way of securing the happy progress of society.

35. The wisdom and supreme utility of this doctrine are admitted by all who really understand it. With good reason outstanding statesmen have asserted that, after a study of various social systems, they have found nothing sounder than the principles expounded in the Encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*. In non-Catholic, even in non-Christian countries, men recognize the great value to society of the social doctrine of the Church. Thus, scarcely a month ago, an eminent political figure of the Far East, a non-Christian, did not hesitate to affirm publicly that the

[18] ST. MATTHEW, VI, 33.

Church, with her doctrine of peace and Christian brotherhood, is rendering a signal contribution to the difficult task of establishing and maintaining peace among the nations. Finally, We know from reliable information that flows into this Center of Christendom from all parts of the world, that the Communists themselves, where they are not utterly depraved, recognize the superiority of the social doctrine of the Church, when once explained to them, over the doctrines of their leaders and their teachers. Only those blinded by passion and hatred close their eyes to the light of truth and obstinately struggle against it.

ALLEGED CONFLICT BETWEEN DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE

36. But the enemies of the Church, though forced to acknowledge the wisdom of her doctrine, accuse her of having failed to act in conformity with her principles, and from this conclude to the necessity of seeking other solutions. The utter falseness and injustice of this accusation is shown by the whole history of Christianity. To refer only to a single typical trait, it was Christianity that first affirmed the real and universal brotherhood of all men of whatever race and condition. This doctrine she proclaimed by a method, and with an amplitude and conviction, unknown to preceding centuries; and with it she potently contributed to the abolition of slavery. Not bloody revolution, but the inner force of her teaching made the proud Roman matron see in her slave a sister in Christ. It is Christianity that adores the Son of God, made Man for love of man, and become not only the

"Son of a Carpenter" but Himself a "Carpenter." [19] It was Christianity that raised manual labor to its true dignity, whereas it had hitherto been so despised that even the moderate Cicero did not hesitate to sum up the general opinion of his time in words of which any modern sociologist would be ashamed: "All artisans are engaged in sordid trades, for there can be nothing ennobling about a workshop." [20]

37. Faithful to these principles, the Church has given new life to human society. Under her influence arose prodigious charitable organizations, great guilds of artisans and workingmen of every type. These guilds, ridiculed as "medieval" by the liberalism of the last century, are today claiming the admiration of our contemporaries in many countries who are endeavoring to revive them in some modern form. And when other systems hindered her work and raised obstacles to the salutary influence of the Church, she was never done warning them of their error. We need but recall with what constant firmness and energy Our Predecessor, Leo XIII, vindicated for the workingman the right to organize, which the dominant liberalism of the more powerful States relentlessly denied him. Even today the authority of this Church doctrine is greater than it seems; for the influence of ideas in the realm of facts, though invisible and not easily measured, is surely of predominant importance.

38. It may be said in all truth that the Church, like Christ, goes through the centuries doing good to all. There would be today neither Socialism nor

[19] Cf. St. Matthew, XIII, 55; St. Mark, VI, 3.

[20] Cicero, *De Officiis*, Bk. I, c. 42.

Communism if the rulers of the nations had not scorned the teachings and maternal warnings of the Church. On the bases of liberalism and laicism they wished to build other social edifices which, powerful and imposing as they seemed at first, all too soon revealed the weakness of their foundations, and today are crumbling one after another before our eyes, as everything must crumble that is not grounded on the one corner stone which is Christ Jesus.

IV

DEFENSIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAM

Urgent Need for Action

39. This, Venerable Brethren, is the doctrine of the Church, which alone in the social as in all other fields can offer real light and assure salvation in the face of Communistic ideology. But this doctrine must be consistently reduced to practice in every-day life, according to the admonition of St. James the Apostle: "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." [21] The most urgent need of the present day is therefore the energetic and timely application of remedies which will effectively ward off the catastrophe that daily grows more threatening. We cherish the firm hope that the fanaticism with which the sons of darkness work day and night at their materialistic and atheistic propaganda will at least serve the holy purpose of stimulating the sons of light to a like and even greater zeal for the honor of the Divine Majesty.

40. What then must be done, what remedies must be employed to defend Christ and Christian civilization from this pernicious enemy? As a father in the midst of his family, We should like to speak quite intimately of those duties which the great struggle of our day imposes on all the children of the Church; and We would address Our paternal

[21] St. James, I, 22.

admonition even to those sons who have strayed far from her.

I. RENEWAL OF CHRISTIAN LIFE

Fundamental Remedy

41. As in all the stormy periods of the history of the Church, the fundamental remedy today lies in a sincere renewal of private and public life according to the principles of the Gospel by all those who belong to the Fold of Christ, that they may be in truth the salt of the earth to preserve human society from total corruption.

42. With heart deeply grateful to the Father of Light, from Whom descends "every best gift and every perfect gift," [22] We see on all sides consoling signs of this spiritual renewal. We see it not only in so many singularly chosen souls who in these last years have been elevated to the sublime heights of sanctity, and in so many others who with generous hearts are making their way towards the same luminous goal, but also in the new flowering of a deep and practical piety in all classes of society even the most cultured, as We pointed out in Our recent Motu Proprio *In multis solaciis* of October 28 last, on the occasion of the reorganization of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences.[23]

43. Nevertheless We cannot deny that there is still much to be done in the way of spiritual renovation. Even in Catholic countries there are still too many who are Catholics hardly more than in name. There are too many who fulfill more or less faithfully the more essential obligations of the

[22] ST. JAMES, I, 17.
[23] A. A. S., vol. XXVIII (1936); pp. 421-424.

religion they boast of professing, but have no desire of knowing it better, of deepening their inward conviction, and still less of bringing into conformity with the external gloss the inner splendor of a right and unsullied conscience, that recognizes and performs all its duties under the eye of God. We know how much Our Divine Saviour detested this empty pharisaic show, He Who wished that all should adore the Father "in spirit and in truth." [24] The Catholic who does not live really and sincerely according to the Faith he professes will not long be master of himself in these days when the winds of strife and persecution blow so fiercely, but will be swept away defenseless in this new deluge which threatens the world. And thus, while he is preparing his own ruin, he is exposing to ridicule the very name of Christian.

Detachment From Worldly Goods

44. And here We wish, Venerable Brethren, to insist more particularly on two teachings of Our Lord which have a special bearing on the present condition of the human race: detachment from earthly goods and the precept of charity. "Blessed are the poor in spirit" were the first words that fell from the lips of the Divine Master in His sermon on the mount.[25] This lesson is more than ever necessary in these days of materialism athirst for the goods and pleasures of this earth. All Christians, rich or poor, must keep their eye fixed on heaven, remembering that "we have not here a lasting city, but we seek one that is to come." [26]

[24] ST. JOHN, IV, 23.
[25] ST. MATTHEW, V, 3.
[26] HEBREWS, XIII, 14.

The rich should not place their happiness in things of earth nor spend their best efforts in the acquisition of them. Rather, considering themselves only as stewards of their earthly goods, let them be mindful of the account they must render of them to their Lord and Master, and value them as precious means that God has put into their hands for doing good; let them not fail, besides, to distribute of their abundance to the poor, according to the evangelical precept.[27] Otherwise there shall be verified of them and their riches the harsh condemnation of St. James the Apostle: "Go to now, ye rich men; weep and howl in your miseries which shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten; your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be for a testimony against you and shall eat your flesh like fire. You have stored up to yourselves wrath against the last days. . . ." [28]

45. But the poor too, in their turn, while engaged, according to the laws of charity and justice, in acquiring the necessities of life and also in bettering their condition, should always remain "poor in spirit," [29] and hold spiritual goods in higher esteem than earthly property and pleasures. Let them remember that the world will never be able to rid itself of misery, sorrow and tribulation, which are the portion even of those who seem most prosperous. Patience, therefore, is the need of all, that Christian patience which comforts the heart with the divine assurance of eternal happiness.

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[27] St. Luke, XI, 41.

[28] St. James, V, 1-3.

[29] St. Matthew, V, 3.

"Be patient, therefore, brethren," we repeat with St. James, "until the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, patiently bearing until he receive the early and the later rain. Be you therefore also patient and strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand." [80] Only thus will be fulfilled the consoling promise of the Lord: "Blessed are the poor!" These words are no vain consolation, a promise as empty as those of the Communists. They are the words of life, pregnant with a sovereign reality. They are fully verified here on earth, as well as in eternity. Indeed, how many of the poor, in anticipation of the Kingdom of Heaven already proclaimed their own: "for yours is the Kingdom of Heaven," [81] find in these words a happiness which so many of the wealthy, uneasy with their riches and ever thirsting for more, look for in vain!

Christian Charity

46. Still more important as a remedy for the evil we are considering, or certainly more directly calculated to cure it, is the precept of charity. We have in mind that Christian charity, "patient and kind," [82] which avoids all semblance of demeaning paternalism, and all ostentation; that charity which from the very beginning of Christianity won to Christ the poorest of the poor, the slaves. And We are grateful to all those members of charitable associations, from the conferences of St. Vincent de Paul to the recent great relief-organizations, which

[80] ST. JAM 5, V, 7, 8.
[81] ST. LUKE, VI, 20.
[82] *I Corinthians*, XIII, 4.

are perseveringly practicing the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. The more the workingmen and the poor realize what the spirit of love animated by the virtue of Christ is doing for them, the more readily will they abandon the false persuasion that Christianity has lost its efficacy and that the Church stands on the side of the exploiters of their labor.

47. But when on the one hand We see thousands of the needy, victims of real misery for various reasons beyond their control, and on the other so many round about them who spend huge sums of money on useless things and frivolous amusement, We cannot fail to remark with sorrow not only that justice is poorly observed, but that the precept of charity also is not sufficiently appreciated, is not a vital thing in daily life. We desire therefore, Venerable Brethren, that this divine precept, this precious mark of identification left by Christ to His true disciples, be ever more fully explained by pen and word of mouth; this precept which teaches us to see in those who suffer Christ Himself, and would have us love our brothers as Our Divine Saviour has loved us, that is, even at the sacrifice of ourselves, and, if need be, of our very life. Let all then frequently meditate on those words of the final sentence, so consoling yet so terrifying, which the Supreme Judge will pronounce on the day of the Last Judgment: "Come, ye blessed of my Father . . . for I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink . . . Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren you did it to me." [88]

[88] ST. MATTHEW, XXV, 34-40.

And the reverse: "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire . . . for I was hungry and you gave me not to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me not to drink. . . . Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these least, neither did you do it to me." [84]

48. To be sure of eternal life, therefore, and to be able to help the poor effectively, it is imperative to return to a more moderate way of life, to renounce the joys, often sinful, which the world today holds out in such abundance; to forget self for love of the neighbor. There is a divine regenerating force in this "new precept" (as Christ called it) of Christian charity.[85] Its faithful observance will pour into the heart an inner peace which the world knows not, and will finally cure the ills which oppress humanity.

Duties of Strict Justice

49. But charity will never be true charity unless it takes justice into constant account. The Apostle teaches that "he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law" and he gives the reason: "For, *Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal* . . . and if there be any other commandment, it is comprised in this word: *Thou shalt love they neighbor as thyself.*" [86] According to the Apostle, then, all the commandments, including those which are of strict justice, as those which forbid us to kill or to steal, may be reduced to the single precept of true charity. From this it follows that a "charity" which deprives the

[84] ST. MATTHEW, XXV, 41-45.
[85] ST. JOHN, XIII, 34.
[86] ROMANS, XIII, 8, 9.

workingman of the salary to which he has a strict title in justice, is not charity at all, but only its empty name and hollow semblance. The wage-earner is not to receive as alms what is his due in justice. And let no one attempt with trifling charitable donations to exempt himself from the great duties imposed by justice. Both justice and charity often dictate obligations touching on the same subject-matter, but under different aspects; and the very dignity of the workingman makes him justly and acutely sensitive to the duties of others in his regard.

50. Therefore We turn again in a special way to you, Christian employers and industrialists, whose problem is often so difficult for the reason that you are saddled with the heavy heritage of an unjust economic regime whose ruinous influence has been felt through many generations. We bid you be mindful of your responsibility. It is unfortunately true that the manner of acting in certain Catholic circles has done much to shake the faith of the working-classes in the religion of Jesus Christ. These groups have refused to understand that Christian charity demands the recognition of certain rights due to the workingman, which the Church has explicitly acknowledged. What is to be thought of the action of those Catholic employers who in one place succeeded in preventing the reading of Our Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* in their local churches? Or of those Catholic industrialists who even to this day have shown themselves hostile to a labor movement that We Ourselves recommended? Is it not deplorable that the right of private property defended by the

Church should so often have been used as a weapon to defraud the workingman of his just salary and his social rights?

Social Justice

51. In reality, besides commutative justice, there is also social justice with its own set obligations, from which neither employers nor workingmen can escape. Now it is of the very essence of social justice to demand from each individual all that is necessary for the common good. But just as in the living organism it is impossible to provide for the good of the whole unless each single part and each individual member is given what it needs for the exercise of its proper functions, so it is impossible to care for the social organism and the good of society as a unit unless each single part and each individual member—that is to say, each individual man in the dignity of his human personality—is supplied with all that is necessary for the exercise of his social functions. If social justice be satisfied, the result will be an intense activity in economic life as a whole, pursued in tranquility and order. This activity will be proof of the health of the social body, just as the health of the human body is recognized in the undisturbed regularity and perfect efficiency of the whole organism.

52. But social justice cannot be said to have been satisfied as long as workingmen are denied a salary that will enable them to secure proper sustenance for themselves and for their families; as long as they are denied the opportunity of acquiring a modest fortune and forestalling the plague of universal pauperism; as long as they cannot

make suitable provision through public or private insurance for old age, for periods of illness and unemployment. In a word, to repeat what has been said in Our Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno:* "Then only will the economic and social order be soundly established and attain its ends, when it offers, to all and to each, all those goods which the wealth and resources of nature, technical science and the corporate organization of social affairs can give. These goods should be sufficient to supply all necessities and reasonable comforts, and to uplift men to that higher standard of life which, provided it be used with prudence, is not only not a hindrance but is of singular help to virtue." [87]

53. It happens all too frequently, however, under the salary system, that individual employers are helpless to ensure justice unless, with a view to its practice, they organize institutions the object of which is to prevent competition incompatible with fair treatment for the workers. Where this is true, it is the duty of contractors and employers to support and promote such necessary organizations as normal instruments enabling them to fulfil their obligations of justice. But the laborers too must be mindful of their duty to love and deal fairly with their employers, and persuade themselves that there is no better means of safeguarding their own interests.

54. If, therefore, We consider the whole structure of economic life, as We have already pointed out in Our Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno,* the reign of mutual collaboration between justice and

[87] Encycl. *Quadragesimo Anno,* May 15, 1931 (A. A. S., Vol. XXIII, 1931, p. 202).

charity in social-economic relations can only be achieved by a body of professional and interprofessional organizations, built on solidly Christian foundations, working together to effect, under forms adapted to different places and circumstances, what has been called the Corporation.

SOCIAL STUDY AND PROPAGANDA

55. To give to this social activity a greater efficacy, it is necessary to promote a wider study of social problems in the light of the doctrine of the Church and under the aegis of her constituted authority. If the manner of acting of some Catholics in the social-economic field has left much to be desired, this has often come about because they have not known and pondered sufficiently the teachings of the Sovereign Pontiffs on these questions. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to foster in all classes of society an intensive program of social education adapted to the varying degrees of intellectual culture. It is necessary with all care and diligence to procure the widest possible diffusion of the teachings of the Church, even among the working-classes. The minds of men must be illuminated with the sure light of Catholic teaching, and their wills must be drawn to follow and apply it as the norm of right living in the conscientious fulfilment of their manifold social duties. Thus they will oppose that incoherence and discontinuity in Christian life which We have many times lamented. For there are some who, while exteriorly faithful to the practice of their religion, yet in the field of labor and industry, in the professions, trade and business, permit a deplor-

able cleavage in their conscience, and live a life too little in conformity with the clear principles of justice and Christian charity. Such lives are a scandal to the weak, and to the malicious a pretext to discredit the Church.

56. In this renewal the Catholic Press can play a prominent part. Its foremost duty is to foster in various attractive ways an ever better understanding of social doctrine. It should, too, supply accurate and complete information on the activity of the enemy and the means of resistance which have been found most effective in various quarters. It should offer useful suggestions and warn against the insidious deceits with which Communists endeavor, all too successfully, to attract even men of good faith.

DISTRUST OF COMMUNIST TACTICS

57. On this point We have already insisted in Our Allocution of May 12th of last year, but We believe it to be a duty of special urgency, Venerable Brethren, to call your attention to it once again. In the beginning Communism showed itself for what it was in all its perversity; but very soon it realized that it was thus alienating the people. It has therefore changed its tactics, and strives to entice the multitudes by trickery of various forms, hiding its real designs behind ideas that in themselves are good and attractive. Thus, aware of the universal desire for peace, the leaders of Communism pretend to be the most zealous promoters and propagandists in the movement for world amity. Yet at the same time they stir up a class-warfare which causes rivers of blood to flow, and,

realizing that their system offers no internal guarantee of peace, they have recourse to unlimited armaments. Under various names which do not suggest Communism, they establish organizations and periodicals with the sole purpose of carrying their ideas into quarters otherwise inaccessible. They try perfidiously to worm their way even into professedly Catholic and religious organizations. Again, without receding an inch from their subversive principles, they invite Catholics to collaborate with them in the realm of so-called humanitarianism and charity; and at times even make proposals that are in perfect harmony with the Christian spirit and the doctrine of the Church. Elsewhere they carry their hypocrisy so far as to encourage the belief that Communism, in countries where faith and culture are more strongly entrenched, will assume another and much milder form. It will not interfere with the practice of religion. It will respect liberty of conscience. There are some even who refer to certain changes recently introduced into soviet legislation as a proof that Communism is about to abandon its program of war against God.

58. See to it, Venerable Brethren, that the Faithful do not allow themselves to be deceived! Communism is intrinsically wrong, and no one who would save Christian civilization may collaborate with it in any undertaking whatsoever. Those who permit themselves to be deceived into lending their aid towards the triumph of Communism in their own country, will be the first to fall victims of their error. And the greater the antiquity and grandeur of the Christian civilization in the regions

where Communism successfully penetrates, so much more devastating will be the hatred displayed by the godless.

Prayer and Penance

59. But "unless the Lord keep the city, he watcheth in vain that keepeth it." [88] And so, as a final and most efficacious remedy, We recommend, Venerable Brethren, that in your dioceses you use the most practical means to foster and intensify the spirit of prayer joined with Christian penance. When the Apostles asked the Saviour why they had been unable to drive the evil spirit from a demoniac, Our Lord answered: "This kind is not cast out but by prayer and fasting." [89] So, too, the evil which today torments humanity can be conquered only by a world-wide holy crusade of prayer and penance. We ask especially the Contemplative Orders, men and women, to redouble their prayers and sacrifices to obtain from heaven efficacious aid for the Church in the present struggle. Let them implore also the powerful intercession of the Immaculate Virgin who, having crushed the head of the serpent of old, remains the sure protectress and invincible "Help of Christians."

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[88] Psalms, CXXVI, 1.
[89] St. Matthew, XVII, 20.

V

MINISTERS AND CO-WORKERS IN CATHOLIC SOCIAL ACTION

Priests

60. To apply the remedies thus briefly indicated to the task of saving the world as We have traced it above, Jesus Christ, our Divine King, has chosen priests as the first-line ministers and messengers of His gospel. Theirs is the duty, assigned to them by a special vocation, under the direction of their Bishops and in filial obedience to the Vicar of Christ on earth, of keeping alight in the world the torch of Faith, and of filling the hearts of the Faithful with that supernatural trust which has aided the Church to fight and win so many other battles in the name of Christ: "This is the victory which overcometh the world, our Faith." [40]

61. To priests in a special way We recommend anew the oft-repeated counsel of Our Predecessor, Leo XIII, to go to the workingman. We make this advice Our own, and faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ and His Church, We thus complete it: "Go to the workingman, especially where he is poor; and in general, go to the poor." The poor are obviously more exposed than others to the wiles of agitators who, taking advantage of their ext me need, kindle their hearts to envy of the rich and urge them to seize by force what fortune seems to have denied them unjustly. If the priest will not go to the workingman and to the poor, to

[40] I Epist. St. John, V, 4.

warn them or to disabuse them of prejudice and false theory, they will become an easy prey for the apostles of Communism.

62. Indisputably much has been done in this direction, especially after the publication of the Encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*. We are happy to voice Our paternal approval of the zealous pastoral activity manifested by so many Bishops and priests who have with due prudence and caution been planning and applying new methods of apostolate more adapted to modern needs. But for the solution of our present problem, all this effort is still inadequate. When our country is in danger, everything not strictly necessary, everything not bearing directly on the urgent matter of unified defense, takes second place. So we must act in today's crisis. Every other enterprise, however attractive and helpful, must yield before the vital need of protecting the very foundation of the Faith and of Christian civilization. Let our parish priests, therefore, while providing of course for the normal needs of the Faithful, dedicate the better part of their endeavors and their zeal to winning back the laboring masses to Christ and to His Church. Let them work to infuse the Christian spirit into quarters where it is least at home. The willing response of the masses, and results far exceeding their expectations, will not fail to reward them for their strenuous pioneer labor. This has been and continues to be our experience in Rome and in other capitals, where zealous parish communities are being formed as new churches are built in the suburban districts, and real miracles are being worked in the conversion of

people whose hostility to religion has been due solely to the fact that they did not know it.

63. But the most efficacious means of apostolate among the poor and lowly is the priest's example, the practice of all those sacerdotal virtues which We have described in Our Encyclical *Ad Catholici Sacerdotii.*[41] Especially needful, however, for the present situation is the shining example of a life which is humble, poor and disinterested, in imitation of a Divine Master Who could say to the world with divine simplicity: "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." [42] A priest who is really poor and disinterested in the Gospel sense may work among his flock marvels recalling a Saint Vincent de Paul, a Cure of Ars, a Cottolengo, a Don Bosco and so many others; while an avaricious and selfish priest, as We have noted in the above-mentioned Encyclical, even though he should not plunge with Judas to the abyss of treason, will never be more than empty "sounding brass" and useless "tinkling cymbal." [43] Too often, indeed, he will be a hindrance rather than an instrument of grace in the midst of his people. Furthermore, where a secular priest or religious is obliged by his office to administer temporal property, let him remember that he is not only to observe scrupulously all that charity and justice prescribe, but that he has a special obligation to conduct himself in very truth as a father of the poor.

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[41] Dec. 20, 1935; A. A. S., vol. XXVIII (1936), pp. 5-53.

[42] St. Matthew, VIII, 20

[43] I Corinthians, XIII, 1.

Catholic Action

64. After this appeal to the clergy, We extend Our paternal invitation to Our beloved sons among the laity who are doing battle in the ranks of Catholic Action. On another occasion [44] We have called this movement so dear to Our heart "a particularly providential assistance" in the work of the Church during these troublous times. Catholic Action is in effect a *social* apostolate also, inasmuch as its object is to spread the Kingdom of Jesus Christ not only among individuals, but also in families and in society. It must, therefore, make it a chief aim to train its members with special care and to prepare them to fight the battles of the Lord. This task of formation, now more urgent and indispensable than ever, which must always precede direct action in the field, will assuredly be served by study-circles, conferences, lecture-courses and the various other activities undertaken with a view to making known the Christian solution of the social problem.

65. The militant leaders of Catholic Action, thus properly prepared and armed, will be the first and immediate apostles of their fellow workmen. They will be an invaluable aid to the priest in carrying the torch of truth, and in relieving grave spiritual and material suffering, in many sectors where inveterate anti-clerical prejudice or deplorable religious indifference has proved a constant obstacle to the pastoral activity of God's ministers. In this way they will collaborate, under the direction of especially qualified priests, in that work of

[44] May 12, 1936.

spiritual aid to the laboring classes on which We set so much store, because it is the means best calculated to save these, Our beloved children, from the snares of Communism.

66. In addition to this individual apostolate which, however useful and efficacious, often goes unheralded, Catholic Action must organize propaganda on a large scale to disseminate knowledge of the fundamental principles on which, according to the Pontifical documents, a Christian Social Order must build.

AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

67. Ranged with Catholic Action are the groups which We have been happy to call its auxiliary forces. With paternal affection We exhort these valuable organizations also to dedicate themselves to the great mission of which We have been treating, a cause which today transcends all others in vital importance.

HOMOGENEOUS GROUPS

68. We are thinking likewise of those associations of workmen, farmers, technicians, doctors, employers, students and others of like character, groups of men and women who live in the same cultural atmosphere and share the same way of life. Precisely these groups and organizations are destined to introduce into society that order which We have envisaged in Our Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno,* and thus to spread in the vast and various fields of culture and labor the recognition of the Kingdom of Christ.

69. Even where the State, because of changed social and economic conditions, has felt obliged to intervene directly in order to aid and regulate such organizations by special legislative enactments, supposing always the necessary respect for liberty and private initiative, Catholic Action may not urge the circumstance as an excuse for abandoning the field. Its members should contribute prudently and intelligently to the study of the problems of the hour in the light of Catholic doctrine. They should loyally and generously participate in the formation of the new institutions, bringing to them the Christian spirit which is the basic principle of order wherever men work together in fraternal harmony.

Appeal to Catholic Workers

70. Here We should like to address a particularly affectionate word to Our Catholic workingmen, young and old. They have been given, perhaps as a reward for their often heroic fidelity in these trying days, a noble and an arduous mission. Under the guidance of their Bishops and priests, they are to bring back to the Church and to God those immense multitudes of their brother-workmen who, because they were not understood or treated with the respect to which they were entitled, in bitterness have strayed far from God. Let Catholic workingmen show these their wandering brethren by word and example that the Church is a tender Mother to all those who labor and suffer, and that she has never failed, and never will fail, in her sacred maternal duty of protecting her children. If this mission, which must be fulfilled in

mines, in factories, in shops, wherever they may be laboring, should at times require great sacrifices, Our workmen will remember that the Saviour of the world has given them an example not only of toil but of self-immolation.

NEED OF UNITY AMONG CATHOLICS

71. To all Our children, finally, of every social rank and every nation, to every religious and lay organization in the Church, We make another and more urgent appeal for union. Many times Our paternal heart has been saddened by the divergencies—often idle in their causes, always tragic in their consequences—which array in opposing camps the sons of the same Mother Church. Thus it is that the radicals, who are not so very numerous, profiting by this discord are able to make it more acute, and end by pitting Catholics one against the other. In view of the events of the past few months, Our warning must seem superfluous. We repeat it nevertheless once more, for those who have not understood, or perhaps do not desire to understand. Those who make a practice of spreading dissension among Catholics assume a terrible responsibility before God and the Church.

INVITATION TO ALL BELIEVERS

72. But in this battle joined by the powers of darkness against the very idea of Divinity, it is Our fond hope that, besides the host which glories in the name of Christ, all those—and they comprise the overwhelming majority of mankind—who still believe in God and pay Him homage may take a

decisive part. We therefore renew the invitation extended to them five years ago in Our Encyclical *Caritate Christi,* invoking their loyal and hearty collaboration "in order to ward off from mankind the great danger that threatens all alike." Since, as We then said, "belief in God is the unshakable foundation of all social order and of all responsibility on earth, it follows that all those who do not want anarchy and terrorism ought to take energetic steps to prevent the enemies of religion from attaining the goal they have so brazenly proclaimed to the world." [48]

Duties of the Christian State

Aid to the Church

73. Such is the positive task, embracing at once theory and practice, which the Church undertakes in virtue of the mission, confided to her by Christ, of constructing a Christian society, and, in our own times, of resisting unto victory the attacks of Communism. It is the duty of the Christian State to concur actively in this spiritual enterprise of the Church, aiding her with the means at its command, which although they be external devices, have nonetheless for their prime object the good of souls.

74. This means that all diligence should be exercised by States to prevent within their territories the ravages of an anti-God campaign which shakes society to its very foundations. For there can be no authority on earth unless the authority of the Divine Majesty be recognized; no oath will bind

[48] Encycl. *Caritate Christi,* May 3, 1932 (A. A. S., vol. XXIV, p. 184).

which is not sworn in the Name of the Living God. We repeat what We have said with frequent insistence in the past, especially in Our Encyclical *Caritate Christi:* "How can any contract be maintained, and what value can any treaty have, in which every guarantee of conscience is lacking? And how can there be talk of guarantees of conscience when all faith in God and all fear of God have vanished? Take away this basis, and with it all moral law falls, and there is no remedy left to stop the gradual but inevitable destruction of peoples, families, the State, civilization itself." [46]

Provision for the Common Good

75. It must likewise be the special care of the State to create those material conditions of life without which an orderly society cannot exist. The State must take every measure necessary to supply employment, particularly for the heads of families and for the young. To achieve this end demanded by the pressing needs of the common welfare, the wealthy classes must be induced to assume those burdens without which human society cannot be saved nor they themselves remain secure. However, measures taken by the State with this end in view ought to be of such a nature that they will really affect those who actually possess more than their share of capital resources, and who continue to accumulate them to the grievous detriment of others.

Prudent and Sober Administration

76. The State itself, mindful of its responsibility before God and society, should be a model of pru-

[46] Encycl. *Caritate Christi,* May 3, 1932 (A. A. S., vol. XXIV, 1932, p. 190).

dence and sobriety in the administration of the commonwealth. Today more than ever the acute world crisis demands that those who dispose of immense funds, built up on the sweat and toil of millions, keep constantly and singly in mind the common good. State functionaries and all employes are obliged in conscience to perform their duties faithfully and unselfishly, imitating the brilliant example of distinguished men of the past and of our own day, who with unremitting labor sacrificed their all for the good of their country. In international trade-relations let all means be sedulously employed for the removal of those artificial barriers to economic life which are the effects of distrust and hatred. All must remember that the peoples of the earth form but one family in God.

Unrestricted Freedom for the Church

77. At the same time the State must allow the Church full liberty to fulfill her divine and spiritual mission, and this in itself will be an effectual contribution to the rescue of nations from the dread torment of the present hour. Everywhere today there is an anxious appeal to moral and spiritual forces; and rightly so, for the evil we must combat is at its origin primarily an evil of the spiritual order. From this polluted source the monstrous emanations of the communistic system flow with satanic logic. Now, the Catholic Church is undoubtedly preeminent among the moral and religious forces of today. Therefore the very good of humanity demands that her work be allowed to proceed unhindered.

78. Those who act otherwise, and at the same time fondly pretend to attain their objective with

purely political or economic means, are in the grip of a dangerous error. When religion is banished from the school, from education and from public life, when the representatives of Christianity and its sacred rites are held up to ridicule, are we not really fostering the materialism which is the fertile soil of Communism? Neither force, however well organized it be, nor earthly ideals however lofty or noble, can control a movement whose roots lie in the excessive esteem for the goods of this world.

79. We trust that those rulers of nations, who are at all aware of the extreme danger threatening every people today, may be more and more convinced of their supreme duty not to hinder the Church in the fulfillment of her mission. This is the more imperative since, while this mission has in view man's happiness in heaven, it cannot but promote his true felicity in time.

THE ERRING RECALLED

80. We cannot conclude this Encyclical Letter without addressing some words to those of Our children who are more or less tainted with the Communist plague. We earnestly exhort them to hear the voice of their loving Father. We pray the Lord to enlighten them that they may abandon the slippery path which will precipitate one and all to ruin and catastrophe, and that they recognize that Jesus Christ, Our Lord, is their only Saviour: "For there is no other name under heaven given to man, whereby we must be saved." [47]

[47] ACTS, IV, 12.

CONCLUSION

Saint Joseph, Model and Patron

81. To hasten the advent of that "peace of Christ in the kingdom of Christ" [48] so ardently desired by all, We place the vast campaign of the Church against world Communism under the standard of St. Joseph, her mighty Protector. He belongs to the working-class, and he bore the burdens of poverty for himself and the Holy Family, whose tender and vigilant head he was. To him was entrusted the Divine Child when Herod loosed his assassins against Him. In a life of faithful performance of everyday duties, he left an example for all those who must gain their bread by the toil of their hands. He won for himself the title of "The Just," serving thus as a living model of that Christian justice which should reign in social life.

82. With eyes lifted on high, our Faith sees the new heavens and the new earth described by Our first Predecessor, St. Peter.[49] While the promises of the false prophets of this earth melt away in blood and tears, the great apocalyptic prophecy of the Redeemer shines forth in heavenly splendor: "Behold, I make all things new." [50]

Venerable Brethren, nothing remains but to raise Our paternal hands to call down upon you, upon your clergy and people, upon the whole Catholic family, the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, on the feast of St.

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[48] Encycl. *Ubi Arcano*, Dec. 23, 1922 (A. A. S., Vol. XIV, 1922, p. 691).

[49] II Epist. St. Peter, III, 13; cf. Isaias, LXV, 17 and LXVI, 22; Apoc., XXI, 1.

[50] Apoc. XXI, 5.

Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church, the nineteenth day of March, in the year 1937, the sixteenth of Our Pontificate.

PIUS PP. XI.

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Apostolic Letter of His Holiness, Pope Pius XI

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Apostolic Letter

OF

HIS HOLINESS POPE PIUS XI

TO THE

MEXICAN EPISCOPATE

On The Religious Situation

POPE PIUS XI

Venerable Brethren, Health and Apostolic Benediction:

THERE is well known to Us, Venerable Brethren—and it is a great cause of consolation for Our paternal heart—your constancy, that of your priests and of the greater part of the Mexican faithful, in ardently professing the Catholic Faith and in opposing the impositions of those who, ignoring the divine excellence of the religion of Jesus Christ and knowing it only through the calumnies of its enemies, delude themselves that they are not able to accomplish reforms for the good of the people except by combating the religion of the great majority.

But unfortunately, the enemies of God and Christ have succeeded in winning over many lukewarm and timid souls who, although they adore God in the intimacy of their consciences, nevertheless, either through human respect or through fear of earthly evils, have become, at least materially, cooperators in the de-Christianization of a people that owes to religion its greatest glories.

In contrast with these apostasies and weaknesses, which grieve Us so profoundly, all the more worthy of praise and meritorious appear to Us the resistance to evil, the practice of Christian life and the open profession of the faith by that vast number of faithful ones to whom you, Venerable Brothers, with the fortitude of true pastors continue to point out the way and to guide, the brilliant example of your lives marching like the pillar of light always ahead. This consoles Us in the midst of Our sorrow, and engenders in Us the hope for better days for the Mexican Church, which, reanimated by so much heroism and sustained by the prayers and sacrifices of so many elect souls, cannot perish, nay rather must flourish again more vigorous and more beautiful.

CONFIDENCE IN DIVINE AID

And precisely to revive your confidence in Divine Aid, and to encourage you to continue in the practice of a fervent Christian life, We address this letter to you, and We take this opportunity to remind you that, in circumstances difficult as those which now prevail, the most effective means also in your case for restoring Christianity are above everything the holiness of the priests and in second place the formation with wisdom and care of the laity so that they will be prepared to coopate fruitfully in the Apostolate of the Hierarchy, cooperation all the more necessary in Mexico because of the vast extent of the territory and other conditions which everyone knows are peculiar to your country.

Our thought, therefore, is fixed in the first place

on those who must be the light that illuminates, the salt which conserves, the good leaven which penetrates the entire mass of the faithful: We mean your priests.

In truth, We know how tenaciously and at the cost of how many sacrifices you care for the selection and increase of sacerdotal vocations, in the midst of all sorts of difficulties, well persuaded as you are that in this manner you provide the solution of a vital problem, truly the most vital of all the problems relating to the future of the Church. In view of the almost absolute impossibility of having in your own country well-ordered and tranquil seminaries, you have found in this city an ample and gracious refuge in the South American *Pio Latino* College, which has formed and continues to form in science and virtue so many worthy priests and which, for its precious work, is particularly dear to Us. But since in many cases it has been impossible to send your students to Rome, you have worked solicitously to find an asylum in the hospitality of a great neighboring nation.

In congratulating you on this praiseworthy initiative, which is already becoming a consoling reality, We again express Our gratitude to all those who have so generously tendered you hospitality and assistance.

URGES STUDY OF PRIESTHOOD ENCYCLICAL

And with paternal insistence We remind you again on this occasion of Our precise wish that you make known and explain suitably, not only to the clerics, but to all your priests, Our Encyclical, *Ad Catholici Sacerdotii,* which explains Our

thoughts on this, the gravest and most important among the grave and important subjects treated by Us.

The Mexican priests thus formed according to the Heart of Jesus Christ will feel that in the actual conditions of their country (of which We spoke in Our Apostolic Letter, *Paterna Sane Solicitudo,* of February 2, 1926)—which are so like those of the early times of the Church, when the Apostles appealed for the collaboration of the laity—it would be very difficult to reconquer for Christ so many misguided souls without the providential assistance which the laity give by means of Catholic Action. More so since at times grace prepares among them generous souls ready to develop most fruitful activity if they encounter a learned and holy clergy capable of understanding and guiding them.

ASKS ZEAL FOR CATHOLIC ACTION

Therefore, to the Mexican priests, who have dedicated their lives to the service of Jesus Christ, of the Church and of souls—to these We direct Our first and warmest appeal, that they will generously second Our and your solicitude for the progress of Catholic Action, dedicating to it their best efforts and most opportune diligence. The methods of an effective collaboration of the laity with your action will never be lacking if the priests will devote themselves with careful attention to cultivating the Christian people by means of wise spiritual direction and careful religious instructions, not diluted in vain discourses, but nourished

with sound doctrine taken from Holy Scripture and full of unction and of force.

It is true that not all understand fully the necessity of this holy apostolate of the laity, although since the publication of Our first Encyclical, *Ubi Arcano Dei,* We have declared continually that it is a part of the pastoral ministry and of Christian life. But since, as We have already indicated, We are addressing Ourselves to pastors who must regain a sorely tried and to a certain extent dispersed flock, today more than ever before We recommend that you make use of those lay people to whom, as living stones of the Holy House of God, St. Peter attributes a profound dignity which makes them in a certain manner participants in a holy and regal priesthood (I Peter, 2, 9).

STRESSES OUR UNITY IN CHRIST

In fact, every Christian conscious of his dignity and his responsibility as a son of the Church and a member of the Mystical Body of Christ—*Multi unum corpus sumus in Christo singuli autem alter alterius membra* (So we being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another) (Romans, 12, 5)—cannot do less than recognize that between the members of this body there must exist a reciprocal communication of life and solidarity of interests.

Hence the duty of each with regard to the life and the growth of the whole organism *in aedificationem Corporis Christi;* hence the efficacious contribution too of each member toward the glorification of the Head and of His Mystical Body (Ephesians, 4, 12-16).

These principles are clear and simple; but how comforting are the deductions to be made from them! how inviting the lines of action opened for many souls! for souls still doubting, still undeciding but anxious to find leadership for their ardor and energy! What encouragement to contribute to the spread of Christ's kingdom and to the saving of souls!

Thus understood, the apostolate does not spring from any mere natural impulse to action. That is evident. On the contrary, the apostolate is the outward manipulation of solid interior formation; it is the uncontrollable overflowing of intense love for Jesus Christ and for souls redeemed by His precious blood, love which leads to the imitation of His life of prayer, of sacrifice, and of unquenchable zeal.

RESULTS OF IMITATION OF CHRIST

This imitation of Jesus Christ will give life and vigor to an apostolate of diverse forms adapted to the different fields in which souls are in danger, or the rights of the Divine King are disputed; it will be manifest in every act of the apostolate which in any way lies within the divine mission of the Church. It will penetrate, therefore, not only the soul of the individual but the sanctuary of the family too, the school and public life.

But the magnitude of the work must not cause you to be preoccupied more with the number than with the quality of the collaborators. Following the example of the Divine Master, Who wished to precede the few years of His apostolic work with a long preparation, and limited Himself to forming

in the Apostolic College not many but chosen instruments for the future conquest of the world, so you also, Venerable Brethren, should care first of all for the supernatural formation of your leaders and propagandists, without being too much preoccupied or grieved because at the beginning they are but a *pusillus grex* (Luke, 12, 32).

And since We know that you are already working in this direction, We express to you Our satisfaction that you have already scrupulously selected and carefully formed good collaborators, who with word and example will bring the fervor of the Christian life and the Christian apostolate into the dioceses and the parishes.

This work which is yours must be solid and deep. Publicity and the method of the circus have no place in it. It looks upon noisy methods as an enemy. It is a work that knows how to develop its activities in silence, even though results may not be apparent at once or lack brilliance, like the seed which, buried in the ground, seemingly asleep, prepares the vigorous new plant.

Encouraging the Interior Life

Then, too, by encouraging the spiritual formation and the interior life of those who are to collaborate with you, you put them on guard against dangers and mistakes that are always possible. Having in mind always the purpose of Catholic Action, which is the sanctification of souls, according to the Gospel precept: Seek ye first the Kingdom of God (Luke, 12, 31), you will not run the risk of sacrificing principles for ends that may be immediate or secondary, nor will you forget that to that ulti-

mate end are to be subordinated every social and economic work and charitable undertaking.

Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us this by His example; because when in the ineffable tenderness of His Divine Heart which made Him exclaim: I have compassion on the multitude. . . . And if I shall send them away fasting to their home, they will faint in the way (Mark, 8, 2 to 3), He healed the infirmities of the body and came to the assistance of temporal needs, He had the supreme end of His mission always in view, that is, the glory of His Father and the eternal salvation of souls.

MEANING OF SOCIAL SERVICE

This does not mean that works, commonly called social service, lie outside the scope of Catholic Action. Because these works aim at the practical application of the principles of justice and charity and are a means of winning the multitudes, since souls often are to be reached only by the relief of corporal suffering and economic need, We ourselves and Our Predecessor, Leo XIII of blessed memory, have recommended them frequently. Although Catholic Action has a duty to prepare individuals, trained to be leaders in social service, to point out the principles that should guide and give the rules that are to be followed by social service, taking them always from the authorized teachings of Our Encyclicals, Catholic Action should never take responsibility in matters that are purely technical, financial, or economic because such matters lie outside the scope and purpose of Catholic Action.

Facing the charge frequently made against the

Church, that it is indifferent to social problems, or incapable of solving them, proclaim unceasingly that only the teaching and the work of the Church, assisted as it is by its Divine Founder, can furnish the remedy for the very grave ills which afflict humanity.

It is for you then (as you have already shown your wish to do) to use these fruitful principles to solve the grave social questions with which your country is struggling today, which are, for example, the agrarian problem, land distribution, the improvement of the living conditions of the working men and their families.

DIGNITY OF HUMAN PERSONALITY

Remember always that, so long as essential primary fundamental rights like the right to own property are safeguarded, under particular conditions, the common good places limitations on these rights and more frequently today than formerly calls for the application of social justice. Conditions may arise in which to protect the dignity of human personality one may be called on to denounce boldly unjust and degrading living conditions, but when doing this it is necessary to avoid giving any justification for violence under pretext of remedying the evils suffered by the masses, or admitting or encouraging changes in customs deep-rooted in the social economy which, if made without due regard for equity and without moderation, might in their effects be more harmful than the evil itself it is sought to cure.

This intervention in the social question will bring you likewise to occupy yourselves with the lot of

so many poor workingmen who too easily become the prey of de-Christianizing propaganda, with the mirage of economic advantages presented to them as a reward for their apostasy from God and from His Church.

MATERIAL AND RELIGIOUS AID TO WORKER

If you truly love the laborer (and you must love him because his conditions of life approach nearer to those of the Divine Master), you must assist him materially and religiously. Materially, bringing about in his favor the practice not only of commutative justice but also of social justice, that is, all those provisions which aim at relieving the condition of the proletarian; and then, religiously, giving him again the religious comforts without which he will struggle in a materialism that brutalizes him and degrades him.

No less grave and no less urgent is another duty: that of the religious and economic assistance of the farmers, and in general of that not small portion of your sons forming the population, mostly agricultural, of the Indians. There are millions of souls, they too redeemed by Christ, entrusted by Him to your care and for whom He will some day ask you to render an account; there are millions of individual men often in such sad and miserable living conditions that they have not even that minimum of well-being indispensable to protect their very dignity as men. We conjure you, Venerable Brethren, in the bosom of the charity of Christ to have particular care for these children, to encourage your clergy to devote themselves with ever-increasing zeal to their assistance, and to interest

the whole Mexican Catholic Action in this work of moral and material redemption.

Nor can We fail to mention a duty which in these recent times is ever increasing in importance: the assistance for Mexicans who have emigrated to other countries, who, torn away from their country and their traditions, more easily become prey to the insidious propaganda of the emissaries seeking to induce them to apostatize from their Faith. An arrangement with your zealous confreres of the United States of America will bring about a more diligent and organized care on the part of the local clergy and will assure for the Mexican emigrants those social and economic provisions which are so well developed in the Church in the United States.

SOLICITUDE FOR THE STUDENT

If Catholic Action cannot neglect the most humble and the most needy classes, of the laborers, of the peasants, of the emigrants, it has in other fields no less grave and inescapable duties; among other things it must occupy itself solicitously with the students who some day will have, as professional men and women, a great influence in society and will perhaps hold public offices. To the practice of the Christian religion, to the formation of character and the Christian conscience, which are fundamental elements for all the faithful, you must where students are involved associate a special and correct education and intellectual preparation, supported by Christian philosophy—that is, that philosophy which was truthfully called perennial philosophy. Today, in fact, a solid and adequate religious instruction seems still more necessary in

view of the tendency, always more generalized, of modern life towards externals, the repugnance toward and difficulty of reflection and recollection, and the propensity even in the spiritual life, to allow sentiment rather than reason to be guide.

We ardently desire that you carry out among yourselves, at least to the degree possible and adapting the instruction to particular conditions, to the necessities and possibilities of your country, that which Catholic Action is so well doing in other countries for cultural formation and to assure that religious instruction should hold an intellectual primacy among students and educated Catholics.

TODAY'S STUDENTS HOPE OF FUTURE

The university students who are actively engaged in Catholic Action give Us great hope for a better future for Mexico, and We do not doubt that they will fulfill Our hopes. It is evident that they are a part, and an important part, of this Catholic Action which is so close to Our heart, whatever be the forms of its organization, since these depend in great part on local conditions and circumstances which vary from region to region. These university students not only afford, as We have said, the most valid hopes for a better tomorrow, but even today can render effective service to the Church and to the country, by the apostolate which they carry on among their companions as well as by supplying the various branches and various organizations of Catholic Action with capable and enlightened directors.

The special conditions of your country oblige Us to recall the necessary, obligatory, inescapable

care of the children, whose innocence is ensnared, whose education and Christian formation is thus so sorely tried. Two grave precepts are imposed on all Catholic Mexicans: the one negative, that is, to keep the children as far away as possible from the impious and corruptive school; the other positive, to give them complete and accurate religious instruction and the necessary assistance to maintain their spiritual life. Regarding the first point, a grave and delicate one, We recently took occasion to manifest Our thoughts. As regards religious instruction, although We know with what insistence you yourselves have recommended it to your priests and to your faithful, yet We repeat that, this being one of the most important and capital problems of the Mexican Church today, it is necessary that what is so laudably practiced in some dioceses today should be extended to all the others, in such a manner that the priests and members of Catholic Action apply themselves with all ardor and at cost of any sacrifice to conserve for God and the Church these little ones, for whom the Divine Saviour has shown such predilection.

PRESENT-DAY PERILS TO YOUTH

The future of these younger generations (We repeat it with all the anguish of Our paternal heart) awakens in Us the most urgent solicitude and the most lively anxiety. We know to how many perils the children and youth are exposed, today more than ever, everywhere, but particularly in Mexico, where an immoral and anti-religious press implants in their hearts the seeds of apostasy from Jesus Christ. To remedy such grave

evil and defend your youth from these perils, it is necessary that every legal means be taken and every form of organization be put in motion, as for example, the Leagues of Fathers of Families and the morality and vigilance committees for publications and censorship of the cinema.

CATHOLIC ACTION SAFEGUARD AGAINST EVIL

Regarding the individual defense of children and youths, We know, from reports which reach Us from all over the world, that activity in the ranks of Catholic Action constitutes the best protection against the strategems of evil, the most efficacious training ground in Christian strength. These youths, enraptured with the beauty of the Christian ideal, sustained by the Divine Help which is assured by prayer and the Sacraments, will dedicate themselves with ardor and joy to the conquest of the souls of their companions, gathering consoling harvests of good.

In this We have another proof that in view of the grave problems of Mexico, it must not be said that Catholic Action holds a place of secondary importance. If ever this institution, which is the educator of consciences and the former of moral qualities, were set aside in favor of another extrinsic work of whatsoever species, even if it were a case of defending necessary religious and civil liberty, it would be a sad mistake; because the salvation of Mexico, as of all human society, lies above all in the eternal and immutable evangelical doctrine and in the sincere practice of Christian morals.

For the rest, once this gradation of values and activities is established, it must be admitted that

for Christian life to develop itself it must have recourse to external and sensible means; that the Church, being a society of men, cannot exist or develop if it does not enjoy liberty of action, and that its members have the right to find in civil society the possibility of living according to the dictates of their consciences.

Consequently, it is quite natural that when the most elementary religious and civil liberties are attacked, Catholic citizens do not resign themselves passively to renouncing those liberties. Notwithstanding, the revindication of these rights and liberties can be, according to the circumstances, more or less opportune, more or less energetic.

CHURCH PROTECTOR OF PEACE AND ORDER

You have more than once recalled to your faithful that the Church protects peace and order, even at the cost of grave sacrifices, and that it condemns every unjust insurrection or violence against constituted powers. On the other hand, among you it has also been said that, whenever these powers arise against justice and truth even to destroying the very foundations of authority, it is not to be seen how those citizens are to be condemned who united to defend themselves and the nation, by licit and appropriate means, against those who make use of public power to bring it to ruin.

If the practical solution depends on concrete circumstances, We must however on Our part recall to you some general principles, always to be kept in mind, and they are:

1. That these revindications have reason of

means, or of relative end, not of ultimate and absolute end;

2. That, in reason of means, they must be licit actions and not intrinsically evil;

3. That, if they are to be means proportionate to the end, they must be used only in the measure in which they serve to obtain or render possible, in whole or in part, the end, and in such manner that they do not cause to the community greater damages than those they seek to repair;

4. That the use of such means and the exercise of civic and political rights in their fullness, embracing also problems of order purely material and technical, or any violent defense, does not enter in any manner in the task of the clergy or of Catholic Action as such, although to both appertains the preparation of Catholics to make just use of their rights, and to defend them with all legitimate means according as the common good requires;

5. The clergy and Catholic Action, being, by their mission of peace and love, consecrated to uniting all men *in vinculo pacis* (Ephesians, 4, 3), must contribute to the prosperity of the nation, especially encouraging the union of citizens and of the social classes and collaborating in all those social initiatives which are not opposed to dogma or to the laws of Christian morals.

CIVIC ACTIVITY OF CATHOLICS

Furthermore, this very civil activity of the Mexican Catholics, carried out with such a noble and elevated spirit, will obtain results that are the more efficacious the more the Catholics themselves shall have that supernatural vision of life, that religious

and moral education and that burning zeal for the spread of the Kingdom of Our Lord Jesus Christ which Catholic Action intends to give.

In the presence of a happy coalition of consciences which do not intend to renounce the liberty vindicated for them by Christ (Galatians, 4, 31), what power or human force could yoke them to sin? What dangers, what persecutions, what trials could separate souls thus tempered by the charity of Christ? (Romans, 8, 35.)

RIGHT FORMATION OF CHRISTIAN CITIZEN

This right formation of the perfect Christian and citizen, in which the supernatural ennobles all the talents and actions and exalts them, contains also, as is natural, the fulfilment of civil and social duties. Facing the adversaries of the Church, St. Augustine proclaimed in praise of his faith: Give me such fathers of families, such children, such masters, such subjects, such husbands, such spouses, such men of government, such citizens as those which Christian Doctrine forms, and if you cannot give them, confess that this Christian Doctrine, if practiced, is the salvation of the State (Epistle, 138, C 2).

Thus a Catholic will take care not to pass over his right to vote when the good of the Church or of the country requires it. Thus there will be avoided the danger of seeing Catholics, in the exercise of their civil and political activities, organizing in particular groups, at times disputing among themselves or also contrary to the directions of the ecclesiastical authorities. That would be increasing the confusion and scattering the forces, to the

complete detriment both of the development of Catholic Action and of the very cause that they wish to defend.

ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN CATHOLIC ACTION

We have already mentioned activities which, although not conflicting with, are certainly outside the scope of Catholic Action, such as would be those of a political party or those which are purely economic and social. But there exist many other beneficent activities—such as the Leagues of Fathers of Families, for the defense of scholastic liberty and religious instruction, the union of citizens for the defense of the family and the sanctity of matrimony, and of public morality, which can be reorganized about the central nucleus of Catholic Action. In fact, it does not hold itself rigidly to fixed plans, but rather coordinates, as if about a radial center of light and heat, other initiatives and auxiliary institutions; which, enjoying always a just autonomy and a fitting liberty of action necessary for the accomplishment of their specific aims, feel the need of following the directions of its program.

That holds above all for your nation which is so extensive, where the variety of the needs and of local conditions may demand that, though on the basis of common principles, different methods of organization be used and different but equally just practical solutions be reached for the one same problem.

It will be for you, Venerable Brethren, placed by the Holy Spirit to rule the Church of God, to give the final practical decision in these cases, to

which the faithful will give their obedience and fidelity according to your instructions. And this is extremely close to Our heart, because the right intention and obedience are always and everywhere the indispensable conditions to draw down the Divine blessings upon the pastoral ministry and upon Catholic Action and to determine that unity of address and that fusion of energies which are an indispensable presupposition for the fruitfulness of the apostolate. With all Our spirit, therefore, We conjure the good Mexican Catholics to hold Obedience and Discipline dear. "Obey your prelates, and be subject to them. For they watch as being to render an account of your souls." And let this obedience be full of joy and a stimulus to greater energies: "That they may do this with joy, and not with grief" (Hebrews, 13, 17). He who obeys unwillingly and only through force, venting his interior resentment in bitter criticism of his superiors and companions in work, of all that which is not according to his own way of viewing things, drives away the Divine benedictions, destroys the strength of discipline, and destroys where he ought to construct.

Duties of Universal Charity

Together with obedience and discipline, We are pleased to recall those other duties of universal charity which are suggested to us by St. Paul in that same chapter 4 of the Letter to the Ephesians, which We have already quoted and which ought to be the fundamental norm of all those who work in Catholic Action: "I, therefore, a prisoner in the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy . . . with

all humility and mildness, with patience, supporting one another in charity, careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, one body and one Spirit" (Ephesians, 4, 1 to 4).

To Our dearest Mexican children, who are such a part of the cares and of the affectionate solicitudes of Our Pontificate, We renew the appeal to unity, to charity, to peace, in the apostolic labor of Catholic Action, which must give back Christ to Mexico and restore there peace and also temporal prosperity.

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE INVOKED

We deposit Our wishes and Our prayers at the feet of your heavenly Patroness, invoked under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe, who, in her sanctuary, still excites the love and the veneration of every Mexican.

Of her, who under this title is venerated and blessed also in this city where We, Ourselves, have erected a parish dedicated in her honor, We earnestly ask that she hear Our prayers and yours for the prosperous future of Mexico, for the Peace of Christ in the Reign of Christ. With these wishes and with these sentiments, We impart with all Our heart to you, to your priests, to the Mexican Catholic Action, to all the beloved children of Mexico, to the whole noble Mexican nation, a very special Apostolic Benediction.

May this, Our letter, be a pledge of spiritual resurrection for your country, as We have wished to date it on the Feast of the Resurrection as a paternal auspice that, since you have been so vividly

participating in the sufferings of Christ, so you may likewise be participants in His resurrection.

Given at St. Peter's in Rome on the Feast of the Resurrection, March 28, 1937, the fifteenth year of Our Pontificate.

PIUS PP. XI.

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ON THE RECITATION OF THE ROSARY

To Combat Modern World Evils

Encyclical Letter

(Ingravescentibus Malis)

of

His Holiness, Pope Pius XI

(Vatican Press Translation)

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on

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To Combat Modern World Evils

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Encyclical Letter

TO OUR VENERABLE BRETHREN
THE PATRIARCHS PRIMATES ARCHBISHOPS BISHOPS
AND OTHER ORDINARIES IN PEACE
AND COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE

On the Recitation of the Rosary To Combat Modern Evils

POPE PIUS XI

VENERABLE BRETHREN
GREETINGS AND APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION

MORE than once have We asserted—and We recently repeated this in the Encyclical Letter *Divini Redemptoris* (Acta Ap. Sedis, 1937, vol. XXIX, p. 65)—that there is no remedy for the ever-growing evils of our times except a return to Our Lord Jesus Christ and to His most holy precepts.

Truly, only He "hath the words of eternal life" (Cf. John, VI, 69), and individuals and society can only fall quickly and miserably if they ignore the majesty of God and repudiate His Law.

However, anyone who studies with diligence the annals of the Catholic Church will easily recognize that the true patronage of the Virgin Mother of God is linked with all the annals of the Christian name.

When, in fact, errors everywhere diffused were bent upon rending the seamless robe of the Church and upon throwing the Catholic world into confusion, our fathers turned with confident soul to

her "alone who destroys all heresies in the world" (Rom. Brev.), and the victory won through her brought the return of tranquility.

When the impious Mohammedan power, trusting in its powerful fleet and war-hardened armies, threatened the peoples of Europe with ruin and slavery, then—upon the suggestion of the Sovereign Pontiff—the protection of the heavenly Mother was fervently implored and the enemy was defeated and his ships sunk.

Mary Supplicated by Faithful in Every Age

Thus the faithful of every age, both in public misfortune and in private need, turn in supplication to Mary, the benignant, so that she may come to their aid and grant help and remedy against sorrows of body and soul. And never was her most powerful aid hoped for in vain by those who besought it with pious and trustful prayer.

But also in our day, dangers no less grave than in the past beset civil and religious society.

In fact, because the supreme and eternal authority of God, which commands and forbids, is despised and completely repudiated by men, the result is that the consciousness of Christian duty is weakened, and that faith becomes tepid in souls or entirely lost, and this afterward affects and ruins the very basis of human society.

Thus on the one hand are seen citizens intent on an atrocious struggle among themselves because some are provided with abundant riches and others must gain bread for themselves and their dear ones by the sweat of their brows.

Indeed, as we all know, in some regions the evil

has reached such a pitch that it seeks to destroy all private right of property, so that everything might be shared in common.

On the other hand, there are not lacking men who declare that they honor and exalt, above all, the power of the State. They say they must use every means to assure civil order and enforce authority, and pretend that only thus are they able totally to repulse the execrable theories of the Communists. However, they despise the light of evangelic wisdom and endeavor to revive the errors of the pagans and their way of life.

To this is added the clever and lamentable sect of those who, denying and hating God, declare themselves the enemies of the Eternal, and who insinuate themselves everywhere. They discredit and uproot all religious belief from souls. Finally, they trample on every human and Divine right. And while they cast scorn on the hope of heavenly reward, they incite men to seek, even by illicit means, false earthly happiness, and therefore drive them with brazen temerity to the dissolution of the social order, causing disorder, cruel rebellions and even the conflagration of civil war.

Hope in God Must Not Grow Faint

Nevertheless, Venerable Brethren, though such great and numerous evils hang over us, and others still greater are to be feared for the future, we must not lose heart nor let the confident hope that rests solely on God become fainter.

He who "made the nations of the earth for health" (Cf. Wisdom I, 14), without doubt will not let those perish whom He has redeemed with

His Precious Blood, nor will He abandon His Church.

But rather, as We said in the beginning, shall We beseech God through the mediation of the Blessed Virgin, so acceptable to Him, since, to use the words of St. Bernard: "Such is the will of God, Who has wished that we should have all things through Mary." (Serm. in Nativ. B.M.V.).

Prayer of Rosary Occupies Distinct Place

Among the various supplications with which we successfully appeal to the Virgin Mother of God, the Holy Rosary without doubt occupies a special and distinct place.

This prayer, which some call the "Psalter of the Virgin" or "Breviary of the Gospel and of Christian life," was described and recommended by Our Predecessor of happy memory, Leo XIII, with these vigorous passages: "Very admirable is this crown interwoven with the angelic salutation which is interposed in the Sunday prayer, and unites with it the obligation of interior meditation. It is an excellent manner of praying . . . and very useful for the attainment of immortal life" (Acta Leonis, 1898, vol. XVIII, pp. 154, 155).

And this can well be deduced from the very flowers that form this mystic garland.

What prayers in fact can be found more adaptable and holy?

The first is that which our Divine Redeemer Himself pronounced when His disciples asked Him: "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke XI, 1); a very holy supplication which both offers us the way—as far as it is possible for us—to render glory

to God, and also takes into account all the necessities of our body and soul.

How can the Eternal Father, when prayed to with the very words of His Son, refuse to come to our aid?

The other prayer is the Angelic Salutation, which begins with the eulogies of the Archangel Gabriel and of St. Elizabeth, and ends with that very pious supplication by which we beg the help of the Blessed Virgin now and at the hour of our death.

To these invocations, said aloud, is added the contemplation of the sacred mysteries, through which they place, as it were, under our eyes the joys, sorrows and triumphs of Jesus Christ and of His Mother, so that we receive relief and comfort in our sorrows. Following those most holy examples, we ascend to the happiness of the heavenly country by steps of ever higher virtue.

Rosary Heavenly Suggestion of Virgin Mary

This practice of piety, Venerable Brethren, admirably diffused by St. Dominic, not without the heavenly suggestion and inspiration of the Virgin Mother of God, is without doubt easy for all, even for the ignorant and the simple.

But those wander from the path of truth who consider this devotion merely an annoying formula repeated with monotonous sing-song intonation, and refuse it as good only for children and silly women!

In this regard, it is to be noted that both piety and love, though always renewing the same words, do not always repeat the same thing, but always ex-

press something new issuing from the intimate sentiment of devotion. And besides, this mode of prayer has the perfume of evangelic simplicity and requires humility of spirit; and, if we disdain humility, as the Divine Redeemer teaches, it will be impossible for us to enter the heavenly kingdom: "Amen, I say to you, unless you become as little children you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matth. XVIII, 3).

Nevertheless, if men in our century, with its derisive pride, refuse the Holy Rosary, there is an innumerable multitude of holy men of every age and every condition who have always held it dear. They have recited it with great devotion, and in every moment they have used it as a powerful weapon to put the demons to flight, to preserve the integrity of life, to acquire virtue more easily, and in a word to attain real peace among men.

Rosary a Daily Practice of Learned Men

Nor are there lacking men famous as to doctrine and wisdom who, although intensely occupied in scientific study and researches, never even for a day fail to pray fervently on bended knee, before the image of the Virgin, in this most pious form.

Thus kings and princes, however burdened with most urgent occupations and affairs, made it their duty to recite the Rosary.

This mystic crown, then, not only is found in and glides through the hands of the poor, but it also is honored by citizens of every social rank. And We do not wish here to pass over in silence the fact that the Blessed Virgin herself, even in our times, has solicitously recommended this manner of

prayer, when she appeared and taught it to the innocent girl in the Grotto of Lourdes.

Therefore why should We not hope for every grace if We supplicate Our Heavenly Mother in this manner with due disposition and holiness?

We desire very earnestly, Venerable Brethren, that the Holy Rosary should be recited in a special manner in the month of October and with increased devotion both in the churches and in homes.

And so much the more must it be done since the enemies of the Divine Name—that is, those who have rebelled against and denied and scorned the Eternal God—spread snares for the Catholic Faith and the liberty due to the Church, and finally rebel with insane efforts against divine and human rights, to send mankind to ruin and perdition. Through efficacious recourse to the Virgin Mother of God, they may be finally bent and led to penance and return to the straight path, trusting to the care and protection of Mary.

Rosary's Power Cited by Examples in History

The Holy Virgin who once victoriously drove the terrible sect of the Albigenses from Christian countries, now suppliantly invoked by us, will turn aside the new errors, especially those of Communism, which reminds us in many ways, in its motives and misdeeds, of the ancient ones.

And as in the times of the Crusades in all Europe there was raised one voice of the people, one supplication, so it is today: in all the world, the cities and even the smallest villages, united with courage and strength, with filial and constant insistence,

the people seek to obtain from the great Mother of God that the enemies of Christian and human civilization be defeated, and thus that real peace may shine again over tired and straying men.

If, then, all will do this with due disposition, with great faith and with fervent piety, it is right to hope that as in the past, so in our day, the Blessed Virgin will obtain from her divine Son that the waves of the present tempests be calmed and that a brilliant victory crown this rivalry of Christians in prayer.

Rosary a Spur to Evangelic Virtue

The Holy Rosary, besides, not only serves admirably to overcome the enemies of God and Religion, but is also a stimulus and spur to the practice of evangelic virtues which it injects and cultivates in our souls. Above all, it nourishes the Catholic Faith, which flourishes again precisely in opportune meditation of the sacred mysteries, and raises minds to the truth revealed to us by God.

Every one can understand how salutary it is, especially in our times wherein sometimes a certain annoyance of the things of the spirit is felt even among the faithful, and a dislike, as it were, for the Christian doctrine.

Therefore, revive the hope of immortal welfare, while the triumph of Jesus Christ and of His Mother, meditated on by us in the last part of the Rosary, shows us Heaven open and invites us to the conquest of the Eternal Country.

Thus while an unbridled longing for the things of this earth has penetrated into the hearts of mortals and each one more ardently longs for the

short-lived riches and ephemeral pleasures, all feel a fruitful call back to the heavenly treasures "where thieves do not break in and neither rust nor moth doth consume" (Matth. XII, 33), and to the wealth that will never perish.

And the charity which has been weakened and cooled in many, how can it fail to be rekindled into love in the souls of those who recall with a full heart the tortures and death of our Redeemer and the afflictions of His Sorrowful Mother?

From this charity towards God, then, there cannot but rise a more intense love of one's neighbor if one dwells on the labors and sorrows that Our Lord suffered for all, reinstating the lost inheritance of the children of God.

Diffusion of Rosary Means Increase in Piety

Therefore see to it, Venerable Brethren, that such a fruitful practice shall be more diffused, more highly esteemed by all, and that common piety be increased.

Through your work and that of the priests who help you in the care of souls, its praises and advantages shall be preached and repeated to the faithful of every social class.

From it, the young will draw fresh energy with which to control the rebellious tendencies to evil and to preserve intact the stainless purity of the soul; also in it, the old will again find repose, relief and peace from their anxious cares. To those who devote themselves to Catholic Action may it be a spur to impel them to a more fervent and active work of apostolate; and to all those who suffer in

any way, especially the dying, may it bring comfort and increase the hope of eternal happiness.

The fathers and mothers of families particularly must give an example to their children, especially when, at sunset, they gather together after the day's work, within the domestic walls, and recite the Holy Rosary on bended knees before the image of the Virgin, together fusing voice, faith and sentiment. This is a beautiful and salutary custom, from which certainly there cannot but be derived tranquility and abundance of heavenly gifts for the household.

Holy Father's Words to Newly Wedded Couples

When very frequently We receive newly-married couples in audience and address paternal words to them, We give them Rosaries, We recommend these to them earnestly, and We exhort them, citing Our own example, not to let even one day pass without saying the Rosary, no matter how burdened they may be with many cares and labors.

For these reasons, Venerable Brethren, We have thought to exhort you earnestly, and through you, all the faithful, to carry out this pious practice. Nor do We doubt that you, listening, with your usual response to Our paternal invitation, will bring about abundant fruits once more.

And in addressing this Encyclical to you, another motive impels Us. We wish that, together with Us, Our many children in Jesus Christ shall unite and render thanks to the Mother of God for the better health We have happily regained.

This grace, as We have had occasion to write

(Cf. Chirograph to Cardinal E. Pacelli, *Osservatore Romano,* 5th September 1937), We attribute to the special intercession of the Virgin of Lisieux, St. Teresa of the Child Jesus. But We know, though, that everything comes to us granted by Almighty God through the hands of Our Lady.

Asks Reparation for Offense to Blessed Mother

And lastly, as there has been launched in the public press with rash insolence, a very grave injury to the Blessed Virgin, We cannot do less than profit by this occasion to offer, together with the Episcopate and the people of that nation which venerates Mary as "Queen of the Kingdom of Poland," and with the homage of our piety, due reparation to the august Queen, and denounce to the whole world this sacrilege committed with impunity, as a painful and unworthy thing.

Meanwhile, with a full heart We impart to You, Venerable Brethren, and to the flock entrusted to the care of each of you, the Apostolic Blessing as an augury of heavenly graces and in token of Our Paternal benevolence.

Given at Castelgandolfo, near Rome, on the 29th of the month of September, on the Feast of the Dedication of St. Michael Archangel, in the year 1937, the sixteenth of Our Pontificate.

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